APPLE BLACK

whyt MANGA

1

FREEDOM DAY

Story & Art by

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MANY YEARS AGO, HUMANS SET OUT TO RETRIEVE FRUITS CALLED "BLACK" THAT TURNED HUMANS INTO SORCERERS.
NOW ALL BLACK ARE EXTINCT, HUMANS STILL HAVE SORCERY INHERITED FROM THEIR ANCESTORS, BUT AS GENERATIONS GO BY, THE EFFECTS OF BLACK IN THE BLOODLINE DIMINISHES.
APPLE BLACK SEED PARTICLES WERE FOUND AND EXAMINED BY A SORCERER WHO KEPT HIS RESEARCH SECRET.
NOW MYSTERIOUSLY DECEASED, HIS RESEARCH IS WANTED BY EVERYONE TRYING TO REJUVENATE THEIR BLOODLINE, CAUSING ABSOLUTE MAYHEM.
UNTIL A BOY SAID TO BE BLESSED BY "MERLIN"- GOD OF SORCERY- IS BORN TO RESTORE ORDER. THAT BOY IS KNOWN AS THE "TRINITY".
BJECT APPLE BLACK

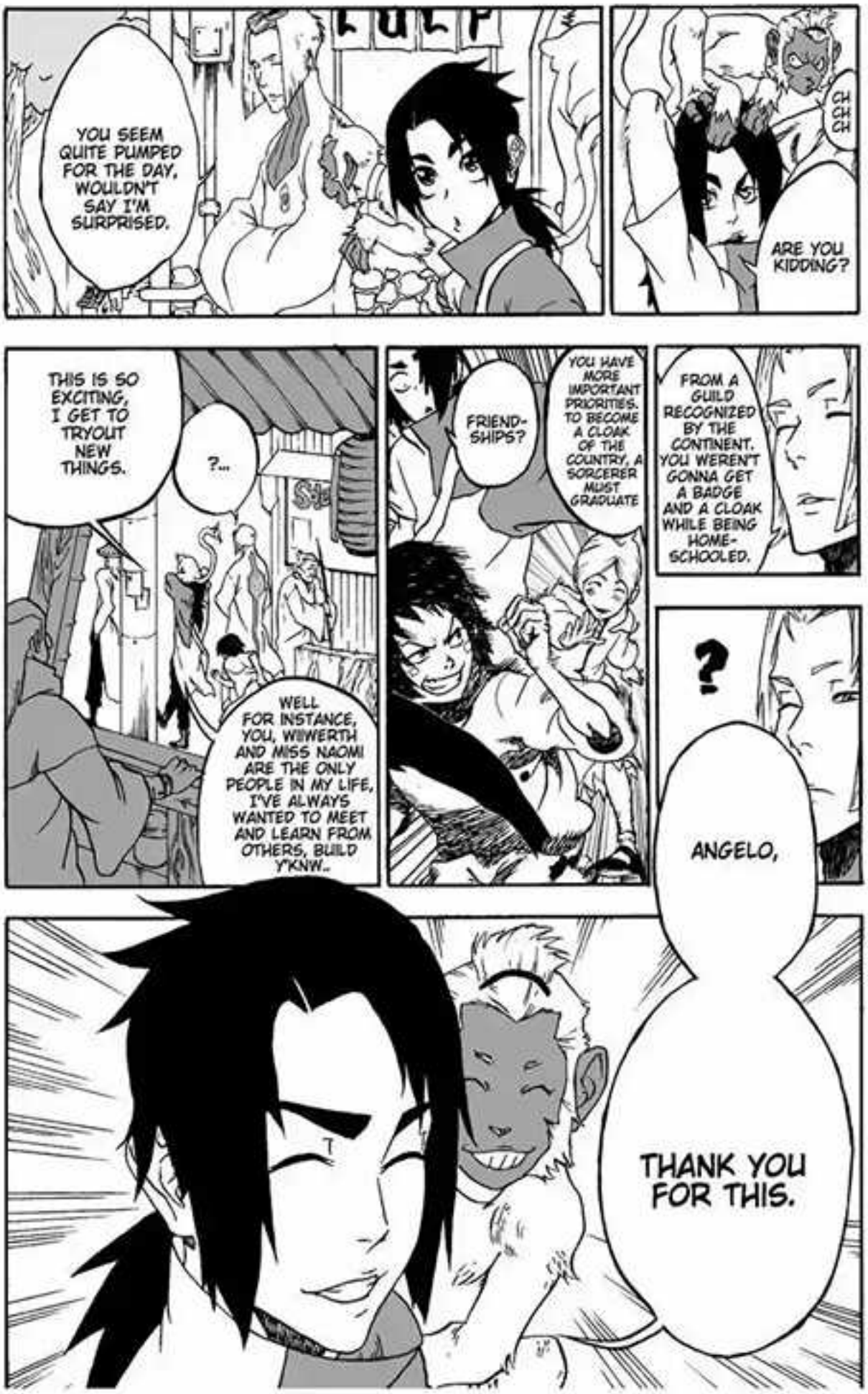
STOP!!
PROJECT APPLE BLACK
!
I SEE, YOU BOTH LEAVE ME NO CHOICE,
HOW UNFORTUNATE.

THAA!
I THINK IT'S TIME WE ALL ...
THAA!
WAKE UP.

HUF!!
HUF!!
HUF!!
HUF!!

WAKE UP!
YOU DON'T WANT TO BE LATE ON YOUR FIRST DAY, DO YOU?
I'LL BE WAITING OUTSIDE.
!
chik!
chik!
WEARS
NOM, NOM, NOM :)
WINWERTH!!
WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT EATING LEFTOVERS?!
YOU'LL GET REALLY BAD GAS!
OKAY ANGELO! I'M READY TO GO!
ALSO, FORGET ABOUT BREAKFAST FOR NOW, YOU'LL EAT AT THE GUILD'S CAFETERIA.
I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU SO ENTHUSED, SANO

IT MAKES SENSE ...
LIVING ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE COUNTRY, ISOLATED YOUR WHOLE LIFE.
YOU'VE PROBABLY BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS FOR A LONG TIME.
WELCOME TO BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND, ONE OF THE SIX COUNTRIES THAT MAKE UP THE EDEN CONTINENT.
WHAT DO YOU GUYS THINK SO FAR?
IT'S AMAZING!


YOU SEEM QUITE PUMPED FOR THE DAY, WOULDN'T SAY I'M SURPRISED.
HEHE
ARE YOU KIDDING?
THIS IS SO EXCITING, I GET TO TRYOUT NEW THINGS.
?...
WELL FOR INSTANCE, YOU, WIIWERTH AND MISS NAOMI ARE THE ONLY PEOPLE IN MY LIFE, I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO MEET AND LEARN FROM OTHERS, BUILD Y'KNW..
FRIEND-SHIPS?
YOU HAVE MORE IMPORTANT PRIORITIES. TO BECOME A CLOAK OF THE COUNTRY, A SORCERER MUST GRADUATE
FROM A GUILD RECOGNIZED BY THE CONTINENT. YOU WEREN'T GONNA GET A BADGE AND A CLOAK WHILE BEING HOME-SCHOOLED.
?
ANGELO,
THANK YOU FOR THIS.

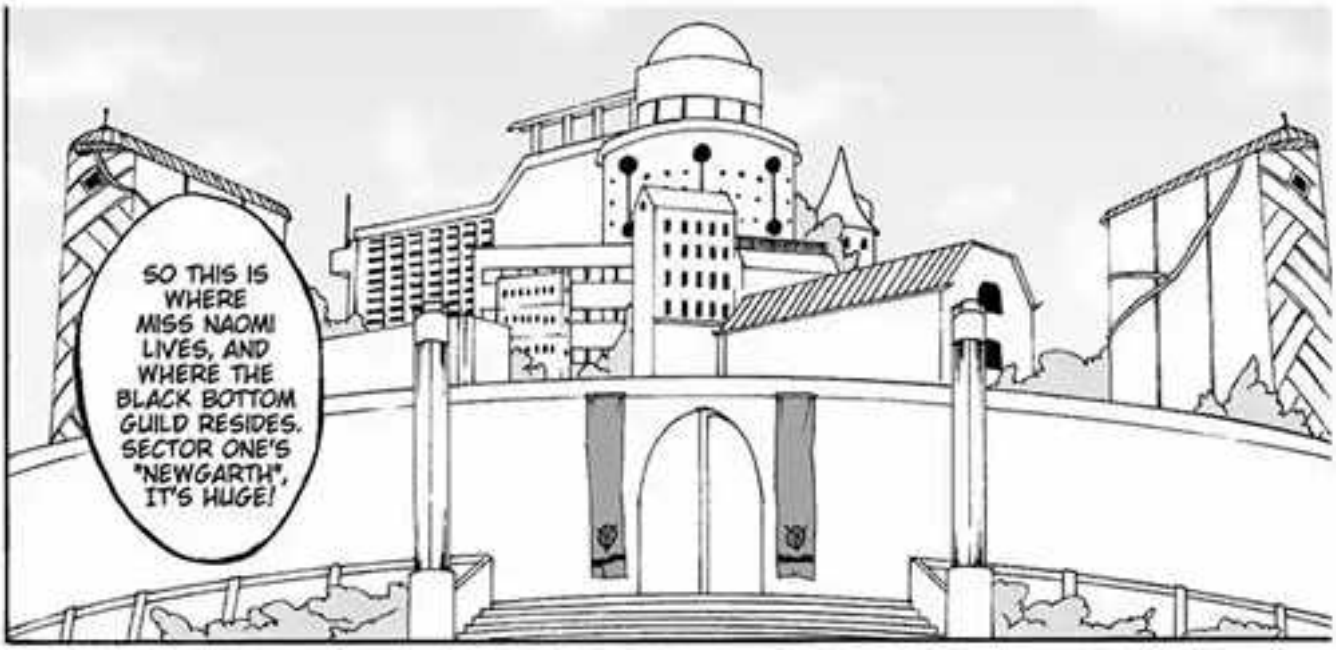
I CAN FINALLY START FIGURING OUT WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED TO MY TRIBE. SO FAR SO GOOD, THIS IS A FRESH NEW BEGINING FOR M--
~GRRR
UM, SANO... WIIWERTH DOESN'T LOOK SO GOOD.

?
EH!!
WIIWERTH, DIDN'T I WARN YOU NOT TO EAT THOSE LEFTOVERS?!

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO MAKE FRIENDS WHILE SMELLING LIKE YOUR POOP ?!!!

DOOM
NOW THIS IS JUST PATHETIC.
WEAK SPELLS, AWFUL POTIONS, TERRIBLE SORCERY AL-TOGETHER.
HA
HA
THE COUNTRY PUT FLOWER BOY AND BAD HAIR-CUT IN CHARGE OF GATE TWO?
HA
HA
THEY'RE ALL DUMBER THAT I THOUGHT, HEH.
HOW POINTLESS.
YOU'RE A FOOL TO THINK YOU COULD GET INTO THE COUNTRY ALONE AND UNNOTICED! OUR DEFENSE SYSTEMS HAVE DETECTED YOU AND ALERTED THE MAIN HEAD-QUARTERS
EVEN IF YOU DEFEAT US, WE HAVE STRONGER CLOAKED SORCERERS, LORDS AND DARKS LORDS WHOM YOU ARE NO MATCH FOR!
YOU CAN'T HIDE EITHER, YOUR CLOAK AND THE FLAG HANGING FROM YOUR BELT IS A DEAD GIVEAWAY!... YOU'RE GENERAL GRUDON FATTIMUNGA OF THE BANBURI REBELS!!

AS FOR US... WE WILL HOLD YOU OFF FOR AS LONG AS WE CAN !!!!
HEH... LIKE I SAID, HOW POINTLESS.


SO THIS IS WHERE MISS NAOMI LIVES, AND WHERE THE BLACK BOTTOM GUILD RESIDES. SECTOR ONE'S "NEWGARTH", IT'S HUGE!

YOU'LL FIND YOUR CLASSROOM AS LONG AS YOU FOLLOW THE MAP CORRECTLY.

YOU DO REMEMBER HOW TO USE THE MAP, DON'T YOU?

TOTALLY!
SUCH A HORRIBLE LIAR.
A REVIEW ON HOW TO USE IT WOULDN'T HURT THOUGH...

OH WELL, WIIWERTH AND I ARE OFF.

DON'T WORRY, YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS. YOUR NEW PROFESSOR, MIKAEL, IS AN OLD FRIEND OF MINE AND AN EVEN BETTER TEACHER.
HE'S A REAL NICE GUY, TRUST ME YOU'LL LOVE HIM.

F-48 : D4
No Smoking
ALRIGHT LISTEN UP!
FLICK
THE NAME'S MIKAEL BUT PERSONALLY, I COULDN'T CARELESS WHAT YOU CALL ME.
AS YOU ALL KNOW, THIS IS THE GRADUATING CLASS, YOUR LAST YEAR AT THIS DUMP.
CHU
CHU
JUDGING FROM THE SIZE OF THIS CLASS, I GUESS Y'ALL THINK YOU'RE SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR BEING HERE.
I MUST APPLAUD ALL OF YOU FOR MAKING IT THIS FAR,
BUT YOU SEE, IT COULD ALL BE FOR SHIT.
CAUSE IF ANY OF YOU SUCKERS ARE THINKING OF GRADUATING WITH A BADGE AND A CLOAK...
YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO MEET OR SURPASS MY "STANDARDS",
AND SKIMMING THROUGH THE RECORDS OF THIS CLASS...

AT THIS RATE ...
NONE OF YOU WILL GRADUATE.
ESPECIALLY YOU TWO--
CLASS, WHERE ARE THE TWO GOOFBALLS?

OKAY, LETS SEE ... ROOM F48: CLASS D4
AWW BLOAK! THIS MAP IS REALLY CONFUSING! NEWGARTH IS REALLY HUGE!
D12
I'M GONNA BE LATE FOR SURE.
DANG IT!
DANG IT
KEEP OUT
AWW DANG IT!
THIS IS THE FREAKING ENTRANCE! DANG IT!!
I COULD USE A FRIEND RIGHT NOW, IF I HAD ANY, I WON'T EVEN BE IN THIS MESS.

HUH? MAYBE I CAN ASK HIM?
OH HEY THERE, I'M A LITTLE LOST.
MAYBE YOU COULD SHOW ME AROUND OR SOMETHING? MY NAME IS SANO, WHAT'S YOUR NAM--
WHAT... WAS THAT FOR?
DIDN'T KNOW THE TRINITY SMELLED LIKE SHIT!
AND DODGED LIKE ONE TOO.
SNIFF!!
SNIFF!!

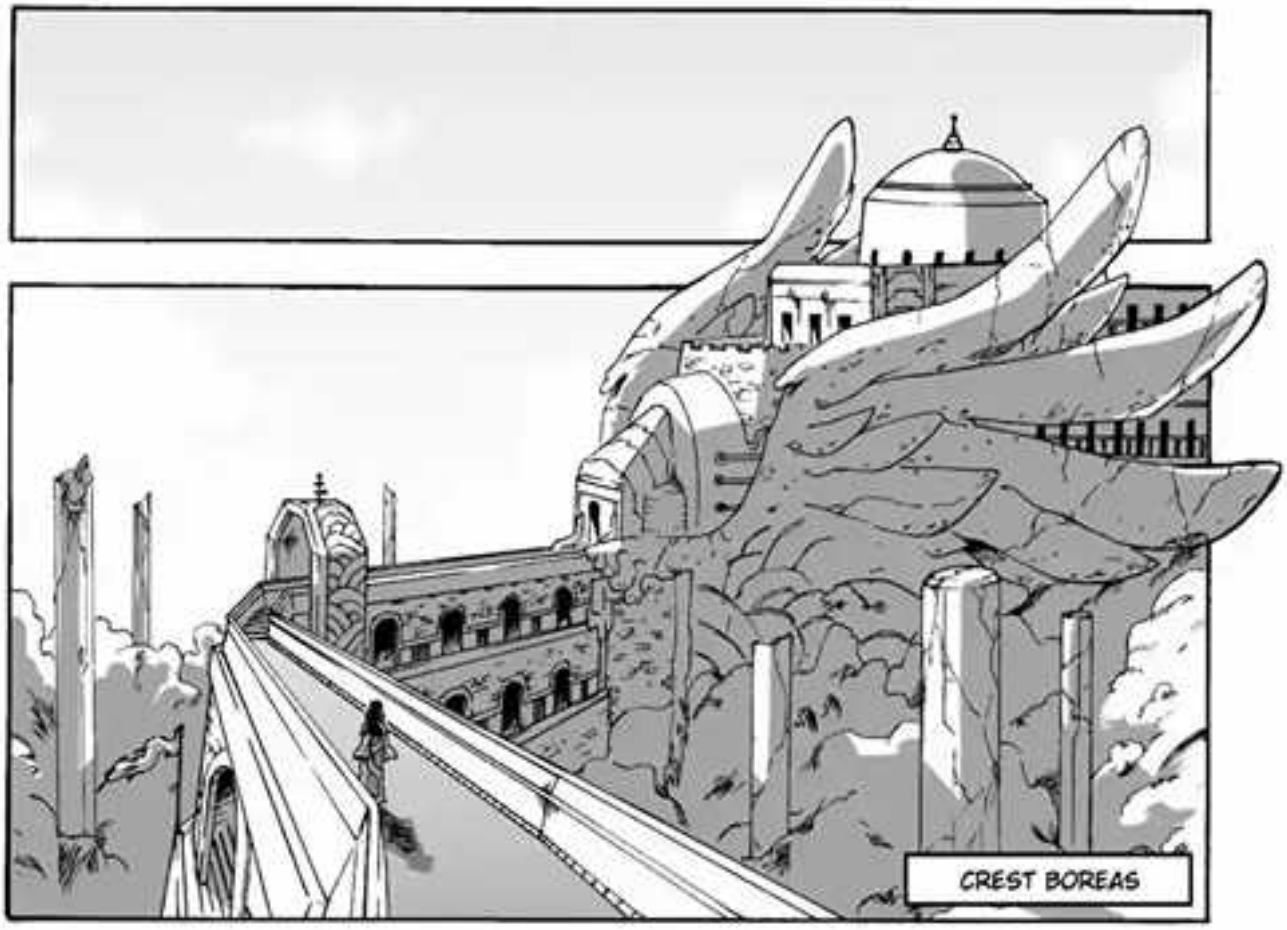
DON'T DISA-PPOINT ME MAN!!
!!
BO
OM!!
HOW DID YOU GET DOWN THERE SO QUICK?! DIDN'T EVEN SEE YOU JUMP AT LEAST YOU'RE NOT TOTAL SHIT AT RUNNING AWAY!!
I NEED TO GET OUTTA HERE, THIS DUDE'S A LUNATIC!!
BUT I'M NOT SHIT AT CHASING EITHER !!!

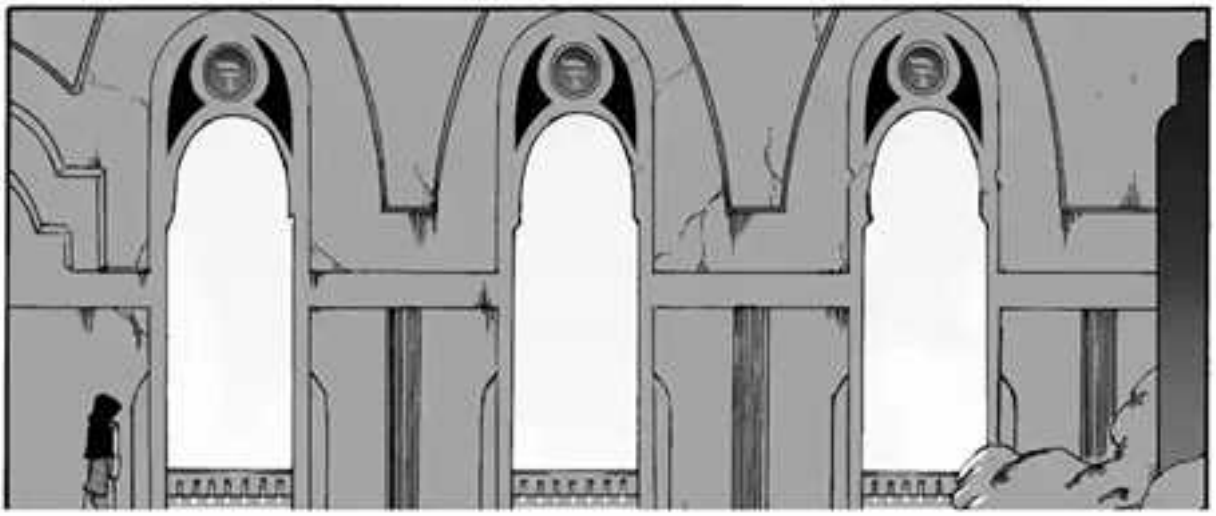
BRRT
BOOM!
DOD
WHERE THE HELL DID HE GO?!
? ? ?
PHEW!
HUH?
MY, HE'S ONE CRAZY REDHEAD NOW ISN'T HE?
EH?!

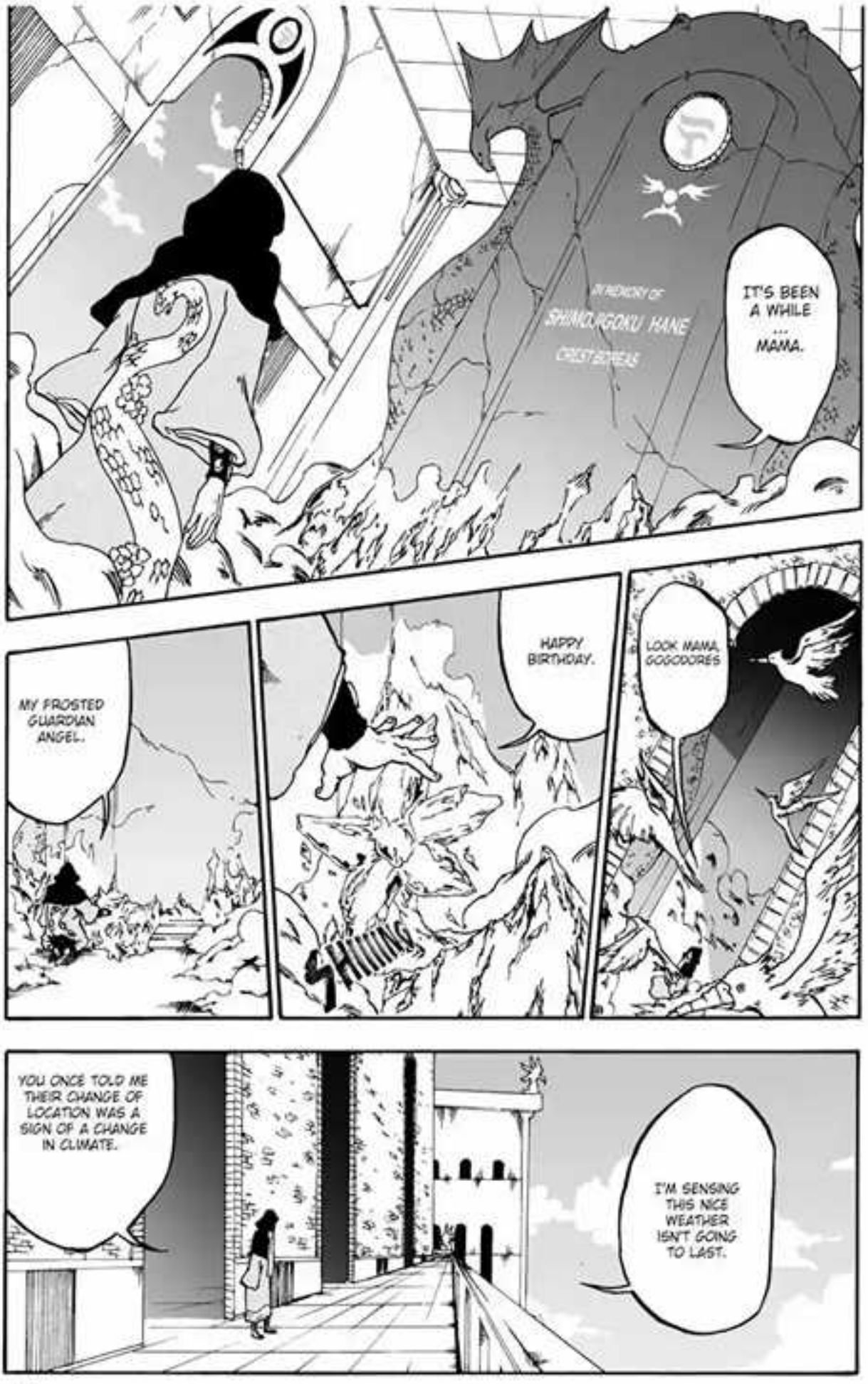
IT'S A REALLY GOOD BOOK, THE NAME'S SYMON.
WHY IN THE WORLD IS YOUR NOSE BLEEDING? !!!
MY MY,
YOU DO SMELL LIKE FAECES.
STUPID WIIWERTH.
YOU MUST BE TAMASHII SANO,
BLESSED WITH THE ARM OF ARODIHS TO BRING PEACE, HARMONY AND ALL THAT GOOD STUFF.
DON'T WORRY, UNLIKE MOST FOLK, I ACTUALLY BELIEVE IN THE RUMORS.
AFTER ALL,
EDEN'S BEEN STRICKEN BY COUNTLESS WARS, THE EXTINCTION OF PAST TRIBES, THE THINGS WE LOVE, ETCETERA.
HONESTLY, THERE ISN'T MUCH TO BELIEVE IN AROUND HERE.
BESIDES, I JUST SAW YOU PURPOSELY STAND STILL TO GET HIT IN THE FACE.
THIS GUY —
COME OUT AND FIGHT! YOU LITTLE TWERP !!!
SCARY !! ..

MIKAEL...
I DID READ YOUR FACE EARLIER, YOU DO BELIEVE IN ME...
YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO, FOR MY SAFETY...
AND AS FOR WHAT I WOULD DO TO THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR MY FATHER'S DISAPPEARANCE?...
I'M GONNA FORGIVE, TO SET US ALL FREE.

OI! SY!! QUIT FOOLING AROUND!
SHHH
HEH... MY BAD, PRINCESS ZION'S ABOUT TO SHOWER WITH SOME PRINCE PIERRE DUDE... HEHE BESIDES, OUR CLOAKS ARE UNIDENTIFIABLE, RELAX.
I'VE SEEN ENOUGH. C'MON LETS GET OUTTA HERE.
LATER...
HE'S WAY IN OVER HIS HEAD.
TRYING TO ACHEIVE FREEDOM THROUGH A FORGIVING HEART, HEHE... I THINK THE POOR GUY IS QUITE ADMIRABLE.
FORGIVENESS?! STUPIDEST THING I EVER HEARD!
SHUT UP! WHAT THE HELL DOES HE KNOW ABOUT FORGIVE-NESS.
HE HASN'T HAD TO FORGIVE SHIT HIS WHOLE LIFE.
SOME THINGS ARE UNFORGIVABLE.
RYUZAKI —
C'MON, WE GOTTA RETURN THESE DARN INVISIBLITY CLOAKS AND GET TO THE DORMS BEFORE ANYONE NOTICES, OR WE'RE IN DEEP SHIT.
HEH... THINGS JUST GOT REALLY INTERESTING FOR A CHANGE...
CLOSE!
I'M ACTUALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO DETENTION.
TO BE CONTINUED


CREST BOREAS



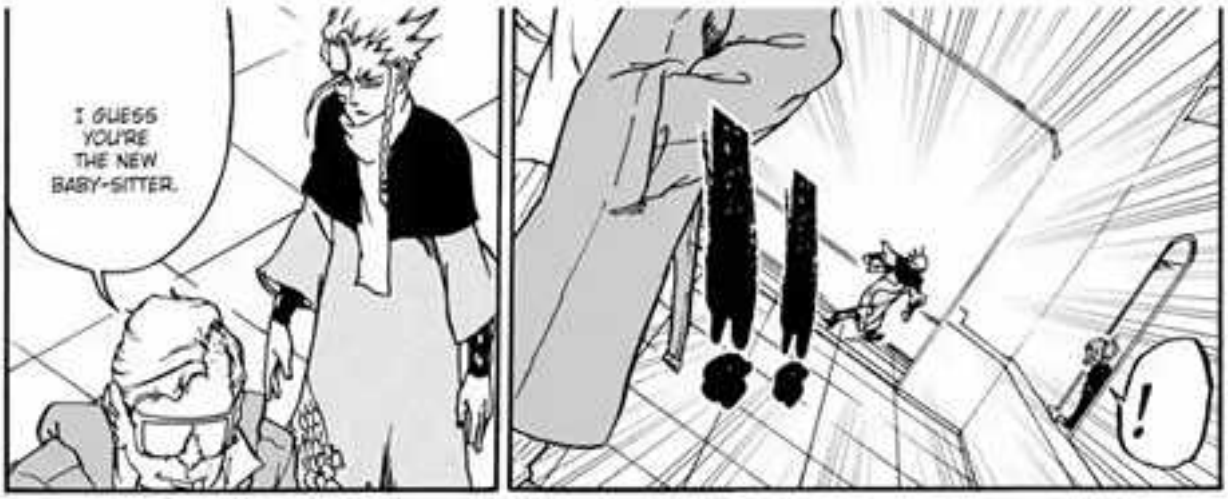

IT'S BEEN A WHILE ... MAMA.
IN MEMORY OF
SHIMOJIGOKU HANE
CHRISTOPHELS
MY FROSTED GUARDIAN ANGEL.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY.
SHIIING
LOOK MAMA, GOGODORES
YOU ONCE TOLD ME THEIR CHANGE OF LOCATION WAS A SIGN OF A CHANGE IN CLIMATE.
I'M SENSING THIS NICE WEATHER ISN'T GOING TO LAST.

WHAT WAS IT YOU CALLED THEM AGAIN MAMA?

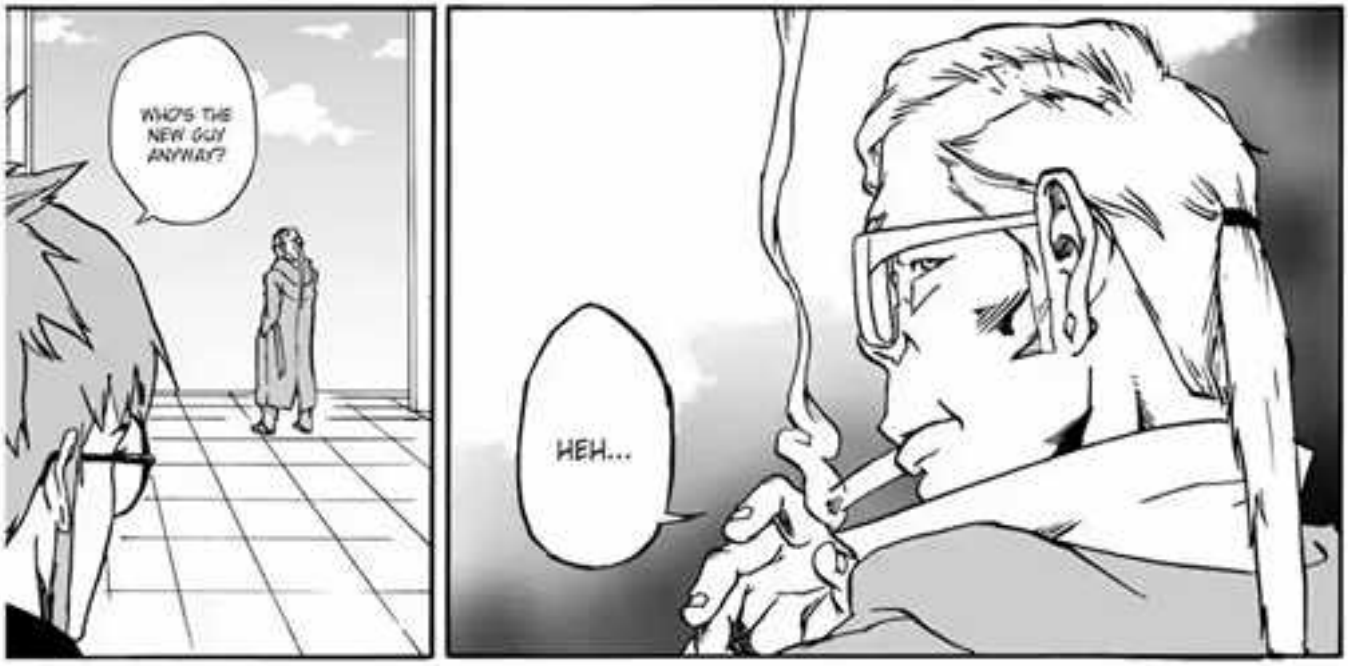
AH, I REMEMBER NOW ...
HARBINGERS OF DEATH.

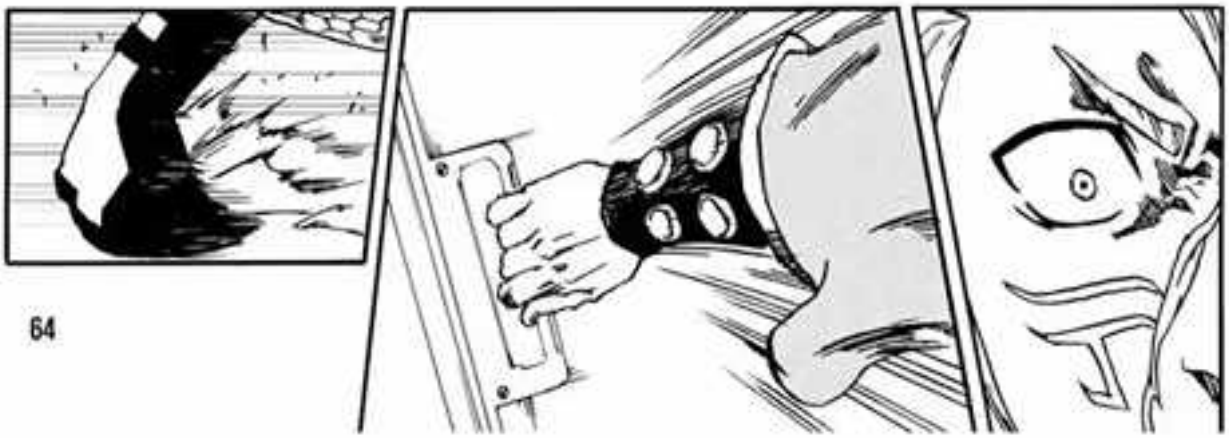
I'M TELLING YA MAN, THE FIRST FELLOWSHIP JUST GOT THEIR HANDS ON A SANBURI REBEL!
SAYS HERE, HE'S NOW HELD IN CUSTODY BY THE SECOND FELLOWSHIP.
I HEAR IT'S ALL A HOAX AND THE TRINITY WAS THE ONE WHO REALLY PUT HIM DOWN. SO COOL.
THE TRINITY?! GIVE ME A BREAK...
YOU BELIEVE IN THEM OL' BEDTIME STORIES ABOUT THE TRINITY DAMNING THE INFINITE NIGHT? DUDE, ADD IN FLYING PIGS WHILE YOU'RE AT IT.
GLAD I CAUGHT YOU ON MY WAY OUT!, SHIMOJIGOKU OSAMU.
MORNING OSAMU! SIR. JAKOBY WAS JUST LOOKING FOR YOU!
THAT'S RIGHT,
ALL YOU YOUNG ROOKIES OF TODAY HAVE ZERO RESPECT FOR YOUR SUPERIOR CLOAKS...

CLOAKS, SUCH AS MISS KIKI AND MYSELF HERE,
YOU SHOULD BE SALUTING US.
MY APOLOGIZES SIR. JAKOBY,
I MEANT NO DISRESPECT TO YOU OR ANY OTHER CLOAK FOR THAT MATTER...
BUT WHY THE FORMALITIES?, BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR, I'LL GRADUATE GET A BADGE, AN OFFICIAL CLOAK ...
AND THEN JOIN THE INFAMOUS PLAGUE X FELLOWSHIP OF THE EDEN CONTINENT'S CAPITAL, "CYRENE". THEN YOU'LL BE THE ONE SALUTING ME... SIR.
I GUESS A FELLOWSHIP IN THE COUNTRY AIN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR YA HUH.
PLAGUE X EH? I ADMIRE YOUR AMBITIONS BOY!
YOU'RE PROBABLY THE BRIGHTEST ROOKIE IN ALL OF NORTH EDEN. LETS SEE HOW YOU HANDLE THE SITUATION YOU GOT UP IN YOUR ROOM.
MIKAEL HAD ME BRING HIM HERE PERSONALLY...
SOMETHING ABOUT HIM BEING...
DIRECTIONALLY CHALLENGED.


I GUESS YOU'RE THE NEW BABY-SITTER.
!!!
!

HE'S THE MOST GIFTED STUDENT I'VE SEEN, MAKES SENSE TO PAIR THEM UP.
OSAMU'S NOT HAD A ROOMMATE IN YEARS, ALL HIS PAST ROOMMATES ALWAYS TURN IN TRANSFER REQUESTS. IS THIS REALLY A GOOD IDEA?, HE'S KIND OF A LONER IF YOU ASK ME, I PITY THE NEW GUY.


WHO'S THE NEW GUY ANYWAY?
HEH...



HELLO!, I'M SANO, YOU MUST BE OSAMU.

.....
HE LOOKS PRETTY MAD.
HEY, IS THAT SEAT TAKEN?
WAIT A MINUTE... I MET HIM EARLIER IN CLASS, STILL LOOKS MAD?, HMM... SEE IF I CAN CHEER HIM UP.
NICE PICTURE YOU GOT HERE. THE WOMAN MUST BE YOUR MOTHER. SHE'S TGORGEOUS, HOW IS SHE?

DROP IT... NOW!
YIKES!, DID I SAY SOMETHING WRONG?

GOLEM PRISON FACILITY
I THOUGHT YOU'D BE USED TO IT BY NOW.
COULD YOU PLEASE, NOT SMOKE AROUND ME?
MILKY. SLITHER
SSSSSS
ANGELO: COME OUT NOW MILKY, DON'T BE SHY.
WELCOME, LORD RIMOKON ANGELO.
ACCESS GRANTED
CLIK!
WHAT ABOUT YOUR OTHER WHITE FRIEND?
HE DID THE UNSPEAKABLE WHEN WE FOUND SAND WITH FATTWUNGA.

HE'S NOT ONE TO GRAB A GREY-LION BY THE TAIL AND THEN ACT SURPRISED WHEN HE BECOMES A MEAL.
ANGELO: WORRY NOT, THIS SHOULD BE FUN.
MIKAEL: WHAT A PAIN.
HMM... WANNA GO GOOD CLOAK, BAD CLOAK?
SIGHS...
AHEM !!!
MIKAEL BAROUGH, LORD ANGELO RIMOKON. YOU BOYS GOT A LOT OF NERVE SHOWING YOUR UGLY FACES HERE WITHOUT MY PERMISSION.
ANGELO: LORD HELENA LOCKLEAVE

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING AT HERE?
NOTHING YET. THE GORILLA ISN'T TALKING
OR AT LEAST SAYING ANYTHING MEANINGFUL.
AS EXPECTED FROM ONE OF BANBURY'S BEST MEN.
DO YOU MIND IF WE SPEAK TO HIM?
YOU DEAF? I SAID HE'S NOT TALKING! WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL IT MAKE?
I AM LORD OF THE SECOND FELLOWSHIP. PRETTY SURE I CAN TELL WHEN SOMEONE'S GONNA TALK OR NOT!
AND YOUR FELLOWSHIP IS IN CHARGE OF SECURITY? DIDN'T KNOW ITS LORD COULD BE SO INSECURE.
WATCH YOUR TONGUE!
IGNORE HIM. WE ONLY WANT A FEW WORDS WITH HIM. PLEASE.
HUMPH!
...
YOU GOT FIVE MINUTES.

WITH SO MANY BOOKS, HE MUST BE SOME KINDA GENIUS.
AT LEAST, ARRANGING THESE BOOKS MAY CUT INTO MY DETENTION TIME.
KEEP...
ARR-ANG-ING!
YES-SIR!
YOU DELINQUENT!, GETTING DETENTION ON THE FIRST DAY WITH THE OTHER GOOFBALLS. WHY DO I HAVE TO WATCH THE NEW KID?!
LETS GET A COUPLE THINGS STRAIGHT, YOU CAN NEVER TOUCH ANY OF MY THINGS, STAY SILENT ON YOUR SIDE OF THE ROOM!
AND NEVER! CHANGE THE TEMPERATURE AIR CONDITIONER AGAIN!
BUT IT'S LIKE A FREEZER IN HERE ...
I'M NOT A BIG FAN OF THE COLD.
SAY WHAT!?
COLD? DID I SAY COLD? NOPE NOT ME! IN FACT, IT'S SAUNA IN HERE.

THAT ARM?!! THIS IS THE TRINITY? JUST GREAT ...
IT'S EXTREMELY RECKLESS TO BE WAVING THAT THING ABOUT.
THERE WAS A BREAK-IN AT THE TAMASHII TOWER HERE IN NEWGARTH.
AND A REBEL WORTH 9,000,000 KARRITS WAS CAUGHT.
EDEN ISN'T EXACTLY THE IDEAL SAFE HAVEN FOR THE SO-CALLED TRINITY.
FATTIMUNGA
TURNS!
THAT'S FATTI-MUNGA!
SO THE RUMORS ARE TRUE, YOU DID PUT HIM AWAY, DOESN'T REALLY MATTER.
LOOKING AT HIS CRIMINAL RECORDS, THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD HAVE TAKEN HIM OUT.
EVEN IF YOU COULD, NOT WITHOUT AT LEAST SHAKING UP A QUARTER OF NEWGARTH.
LEADING ME TO BELIEVE ...
ADJUSTS
THAT THERE'S MORE TO THIS... PLOT.
I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT.

HE LET ME STRIKE THE FINAL BLOW.
ELABORATE.
UNLIKE EARLIER IN THE BATTLE, HE LEFT HIMSELF UNUSUALLY WIDE OPEN.
MAKES MORE SENSE NOW...
GRUDON FATTMUNGA HERE IS NOT JUST A REBEL. SEE, IN ALL SIX COUNTRIES OF EDEN...
ACTUALLY, I KNOW ALL THIS AND MORE. ANGELO TAUGHT ME ALL I NEEDED TO KNOW...
BEFORE COMING TO NEWGARTH.
SINCE YOU ATTENDED JUST ONE CLASS... LATE, IF I MIGHT ADD.
ANGELO?... AS IN RIMOKON ANGELO, LORD OF THE FIRST FELLOWSHIP?
THERE ARE FIVE FELLOWSHIPS, THE FIRST HANDLES THE RECRUITING OF NEW SORCERERS AND POLITICS.
THE SECOND IS IN CHARGE OF SECURITY AND DEFENSE, THE THIRD CONTROLS WARFARE, FOURTH DEALS WITH DEVELOPMENTS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY... FINALLY THE FIFTH, IS IN CHARGE OF HEALTH CARE.
EACH FELLOWSHIP HAS A HIGH RANKED CLOAK, A "DARKLORD" IN CHARGE OF ALL OPERATIONS AND AN ASSISTANT GIVEN THE TITLE OF "LORD". YOU WOULDN'T KNOW ANY OF THIS...
IN THAT CASE, YOU'LL UNDERSTAND THIS...

FATTIMUNGA USED TO BE LORD OF THE SECOND FELLOWSHIP OF FLAIRY CROCKET.

BEING ONE WHOSE BEEN ON THE OTHER END OF A ROOM LIKE THIS, YOU KNOW HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS, SO WHY NOT SAVE ME AND MY 20 KARRITTS TICKET TO THE OPERA AND START TALKING.
WHAT IS BANBURI PLANNING? SPEAK NOW AND MAYBE... WE CAN WORK SOMETHING OUT.

UNLESS YOU RATHER GET TRANSFERRED TO CYRENE. WE BOTH KNOW THAT PLACE'S A HELL HOLE.

...
AW DAMN IT!

I WASN'T TALKING 'BOUT THE CASE.
IT ISN'T "THAT" BAD, WE KNOW THIS GETTING CAPTURED ACT IS JUST A FACADE. QUESTION IS... WHAT'S BEHIND IT?.

I'M OUT OF CIGARETTES.
NOTHING
THANK GOODNESS.

HEHH...

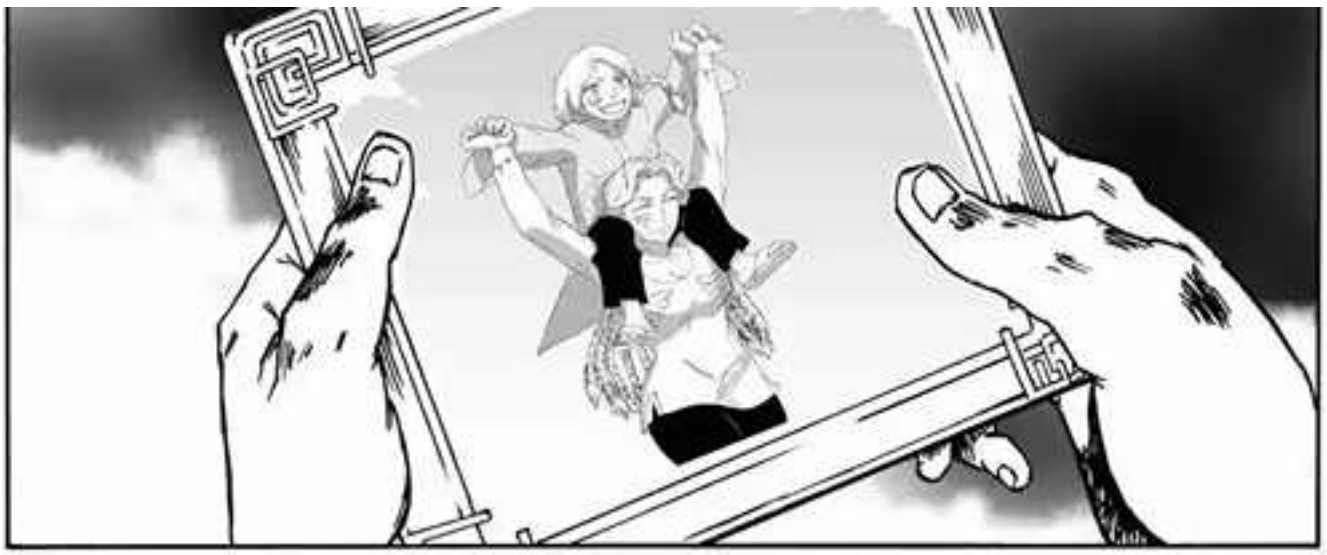
!!
YOU BOYS ARE A FUNNY BUNCH AREN'T YA?
!!
HOW POINTLESS.
SAYS HERE, BACK IN THE DAY, HE WAS KNOWN AS A STEALTH SPECIALIST AND INVENTOR OF SOME OF THE HIGH-TECH DEFENSE SYSTEMS USED ALL OVER EDEN. SO.. HIM BEING THIS SLOPPY RAISES SUSPICIONS. HE'S SMARTER THAN HE LOOKS.

TRYING TO INFILTRATE THE COUNTRY ALONE?, WITH HIS REPUTATION? WHATEVER HIS PLAN IS, I THINK IT'S BEEN A SUCCESS SO FAR.
YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT BUT, HE *IS* LOCKED UP THOUGH
DO YOU FEEL THAT? THE CHANGE COMING, IT'S GONNA BE BIG!
I HEAR THE KID'S BEEN... GETTING A LOT OF UH... ATTENTION LATELY.
NOT SURE EXACTLY HOW YOU DEFEATED HIM...
BUT I DON'T THINK IT EVER MATTERED HOW OR WHO DID HIM IN.
TURNS
MAYBE, I JUST HAPPENED TO BE THERE, THAT *DOES* MAKE SENSE. PLUS...
HE DID WEAR THAT REBEL FLAG PRETTY CAREL-ESSLY.
AND HERE I WAS THINKING THE PROPHECY WAS A LOAD OF CRAP... MEH
HE SURE LET ME HAVE IT, DIDN'T HE?... I'LL BE SURE TO RETURN THE FAVOR AND GET TAMASHII'S APPLE BLACK RESEARCH, THE CAPTAIN WOULD BE ELATED,
WE KNOW A LOT OF FOLKS WHO WOULD PAY HEAVY FOR THAT ARM OF HIS,
THE BOUNTY DOES HIM NO JUSTICE, HOW ABOUT AN AUCTION?

ANGELO YOU JERK ... WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?
IF ANY HARM COMES TO THAT BOY OR THIS COUNTRY,
I'LL SEE TO IT THAT YOU BLEED ALONG WITH YOUR BROTHERS...
TELL ME, WOULDN'T DEATH TO YOU RIGHT HERE,
BE THE DEATH TO THIS... SO-CALLED PLAN OF YOURS?
FOR ETERNITY WITH TERMINATION CRAWLING AROUND YOUR NECKS, SQUEEZING TILL THERE'S NOTHING LEFT.
I'M CERTAIN YOU FEEL THAT.
BUT WHERE'S THE FUN IN KILLING YOU NOW? I'D RATHER WAIT TO SEE WHAT YOU AND YOUR BROTHERS HAVE IN STORE FOR US.

WELL WELL, I SEE YOU GOT PUNKED HUH.
...
WE'RE DONE HERE.
AND I THOUGHT I'D BE PLAYING BAD CLOAK.
I MUST ADMIT,
FOR SOMEONE AS WORTHLESS AS YOURSELF,
YOU'RE NOT TOO STUPID.
THANKS!
YOU'RE NOT AS SCARY AS THE OTHERS, WE'LL GET ALONG JUST FINE!
I'M SORRY ABOUT YOUR MOM, I HAD NO IDEA.
HOW DID YOU?...
TAP! TAP!
NOW, TO TELL ANGELO ALL THIS? HE'S PROBABLY FIGURED THE WHOLE THING OUT,
NOT TO MENTION MIKAEL, NOT AN EASY READ BY ANY MEANS BUT SEEMS EXTREMELY SMART AS WELL.
SANO... AREN'T YOU FORGETTING SOMETHING?

TURNS
?
HUH?
WHAT THE?!!
SEAL!
THIS ISN'T MY DOING YOU IDIOT, IT'S THE INSTITUTE'S. IT'S CALLED A BLACK SPHERE. IT NULLIFIES SORCERY.
USED FOR A NUMBER OF THINGS. IN THIS CASE, IT'S FOR TRANSPORTING ROOKIES LATE FOR DETENTION... TO DETENTION.
HUH? WHAT IN THE NAME OF MERLIN IS GOING ON?! I'M SORRY!, I WILL NEVER COME TO YOUR SIDE OF THE ROOM AGAIN!
I'LL BE GOOD I PROMISE! JUST LET ME OUT!
?
WHEELLAP!
WHEN YOU'RE DONE, COME BACK AND CLEAN YOUR DAMN MESS.
EEEE



?
Chirp Chirp

LOOK MAMA, ANOTHER GOGO-DOREY,
WE'RE ALREADY GETTING A TASTE OF THE CHANGE.
TO BE CONTINUED

NEWGARTH: BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND HQ
HOLD IT!!
YOU'RE GONNA NEED MORE THAN UGLY FACES TO PROVE YOU'RE FROM THE COUNCIL.
BEHIND ME, ARE MY ESCORT CLOAKS.
I AM SOFIA MIRI.
HARI-JIZOU
AND HEKTOR BANSHII.
WE'RE HERE FOR THE PROTOCOL DEFENSE SYSTEMS INSPECTION. I'M SURE MADAM NAOMI NOTIFIED ALL BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND FELLOWSHIPS OF OUR ARRIVAL.
ANALYZING...
BLINK
IF YOU'RE REALLY AN INSPECTOR ...
BLINK

SO I HEAR...
YOU MUST BE MIKAEL BAROUGH, I CAN TELL FROM THE SKULL ON YOUR HAT AND ALSO...
YOU WOULD APPRECIATE OUR CAUTION, IT'S JUST PROTOCOL ...
THINGS HAVE BEEN A LIL' HECTIC LATELY.
BY THE LOOKS OF THOSE BANDAGES.

SORRY LADY, DON'T KNOW YA AND DON'T CARE.
AH.
BUT I KNOW YOU, I READ YOUR FILE BACK AT CYRENE'S HQ.

LEADER OF THE ONYX, THE DISBANDED GROUP OF ELITE SORCERERS WITHIN BLACK BOTTOM'S FIRST FELLOWSHIP. YOU ILLEGALLY LEAD THE GROUP TO THEIR DEMISE BY THE HANDS OF THE SECRET ORGANIZATION AGAINST EDEN, "GHOST".

WATCH IT LADY!
ALL ONYX MEMBERS SLAUGHTERED LIKE PIGS ...
AND ALL YOU GOT WAS A SCAR ACROSS YOUR CHEST,
A LITTLE SUSPICIOUS, DON'T YOU THINK?
YOU INSINUTATING SOMETHING?

NOW LIVING THE REST OF YOUR DAYS AS A TEACHER OF THE CRAFT.
FUNNY, IF I WAS IN CHARGE ...
I WOULD HAVE HAD YOU STRIPPED FROM YOUR CLOAK AND EXECUTED PUBLICLY. YOUR ACTIONS WERE TRULY UNACCEPTABLE, BUT THAT'LL NEVER HAPPEN NOW WOULD IT? SEEING AS IT'S NO SECRET THE MAIN DARK LORD OF BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND...

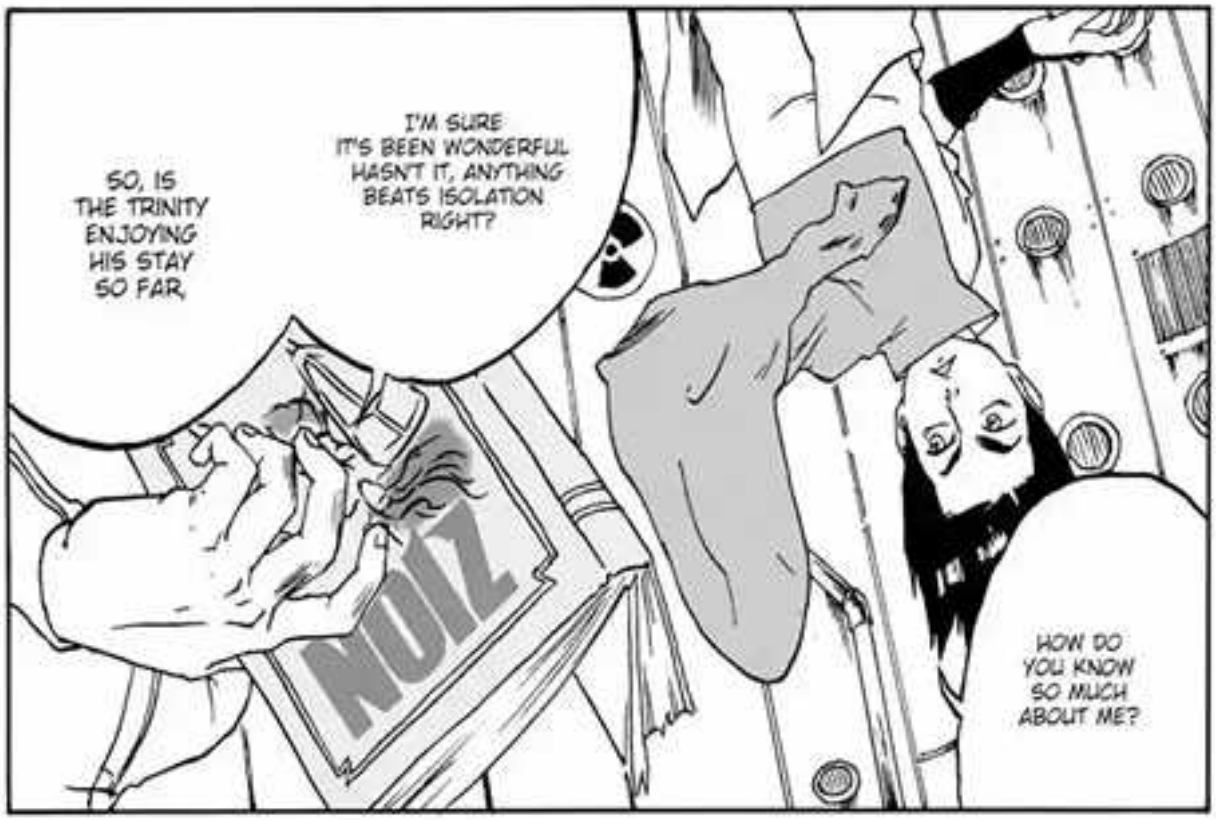
"MADAM NAOMI BAROUGH", IS YOUR AUNT.
BITCH

ACCESS GRANTED...
NOW YOU KNOW YOUR PLACE, DO YOU MIND PUTTING OUT THE CIGARETTE?,
IT'S BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH ...
AND MINE ...
HEKTOR, HARI... LET'S NOT KEEP THE MADAM WAITING.
SORRY BUDDY.

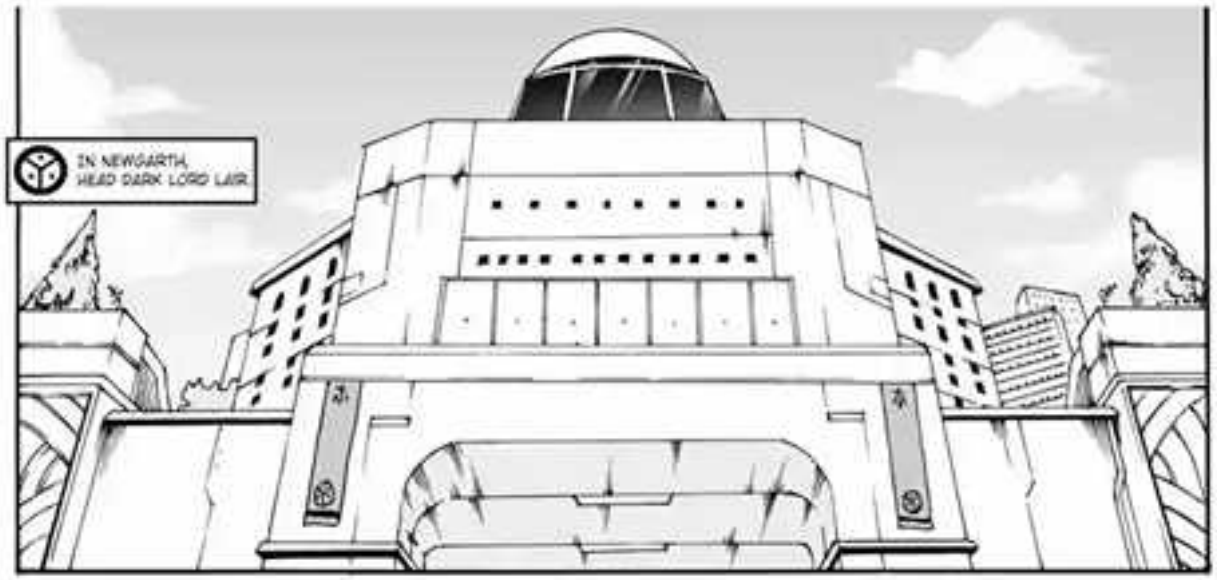
SANO-OO..
OH SANOO-
OO.
RISE AND
SHINE.
FOR WE..
ARE ABOUT
TO EMBARK
ON A WONDERFUL
EXPERIENCE.
HUH?
...
SYMON
YOU'RE...
YOU'RE
BLEEDING
AGAIN.
WAIT A
MINUTE
...
!!
WHY IS YOUR
BLOOD
RUSHING
UPWARDS?!

WHAT IN THE NAME OF MERLIN ?!!!
AH... FULL OF LIFE AS ALWAYS EH SANO!... NO WORRIES, YOU'LL GET ACCUSTOMED TO THE RUSH SOON ENOUGH.
SCARY!!!!! WHERE ARE WE?!!!
TWIST?! IS DETE- HEY SYMON ...
DETENTION SILLY? DON'T YOU REMEMBER? RYUZAKI TRIED TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH YOU...SLASH KILL YOU, THEN WE ALL SOMEHOW GOT THE ORDERS FROM MIKAEL.
RYUZAKI... WHY ISN'T HE... YOU KNOW, LOUD AND ALL RILED UP LIKE BEFORE?
THE 'OL CHAP IS SAVING HIS ENERGY!
THOUGHT HE WAS PUMPED BEFORE? WAIT TILL YOU SEE WHATS NEXT, QUITE REMARKABLE REALLY.

SANO:
SO HE WANTS DETENTION?
SYMON:
OH SO DO I... BUT HE JUST WANTS IT FAR MORE THAN I DO.


SO, IS THE TRINITY ENJOYING HIS STAY SO FAR.
I'M SURE IT'S BEEN WONDERFUL HASN'T IT, ANYTHING BEATS ISOLATION RIGHT?
NOIZ
HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT ME?

SAME WAY, I KNOW OSAMU IS YOUR NEW ROOMIE.
WORD GETS AROUND PRETTY QUICKLY FOR ME.
NOT A FAN OF THE SAUSAGE FEST BUT..
WE CAN ALL BE BEST BUDDIES EH!!
YEAH.. HE HE.. SURE.


IN NEWGARTH,
HEAD DARK LORD LAIR.

FATTIMUNGA'S BREAK-IN IS UNACCEPTABLE. I HAVE REVIEWED YOUR DEFENSE SYSTEMS AND I MUST SAY...

THEY'RE AN UTTER SHAME TO THE CREST OF BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND.

AND YOUR DARK LORD IN CHARGE OF SECURITY IS ABSENT, AVOIDING DUTY IS ALSO...

UNACCEPT -ABLE!

THE REGIME ISN'T TAKEN SERIOUSLY HERE IS IT?,
THE COUNTRY CLEARLY VIOLATES THE REGULATIONS SET OUT BY THE NEW REGIME. YOU KNOW, I COULD HAVE YOU ALL...
OI!,..
THE FARTS DOWN AT CYRENE PUT AN UP-TIGHT TALKATIVE ON MY ASS!
DO YOU HAVE A DEATH WISH YOUNG LADY?
CAUSE YOU SEEM OBLIVIOUS TO WHOM YOU'RE LECTURING.

DON'T LET MY YOUNG AND FRUITFUL NATURE FOOL YOU, CHILD.
MADAM BAROUGH, YOU CAN'T-
GOT SOME'N AGAINST MY PIPE?.. NO FAIR, TABETHA'S GOT NO PROBLEMS WITH YOU
NO MAD-AM!!
HE'S LIGHTING UP TOO?!, BASTARD!
HEIARCHY SPEAKS BITCH.
SO MISS MIRI, YOU DONE YAPPIN?

WHAT ABOUT THE TRINITY?
IF WHAT I HEAR IS TRUE,
HE SHOULD BE HANDED OVER TO THE NEW REGIME, THE BOY IS NOT SAFE HERE, NEITHER IS BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND.
RESISTANCES OF THE NEW REGIME WHO BELIEVE THE ELI PROPHECY HAVE A BOUNTY ON HIS HEAD,
OR TO BE MORE SPECIFIC... HIS ARM.
I
WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, SOMEONE WITH THE STATUS OF THAT NATURE SHOULD NOT BE LEFT TO ROAM ABOUT THE COUNTRY, EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE IN EDEN IS AT RISK.
HE'S LITERALLY TREATED LIKE HE'S "NORMAL" AND HIS IDENTITY, EVEN THOUGH UNANNOUNCED, IS NOT PROTECTED EITHER...
NO SURVEILLANCE AT ALL? THE BOY SHOULD COME WITH US--
HOW DARE YOU?!!
HOW DARE YOU?!! SANG "IS" A NORMAL KID AND WILL BE TREATED AS SUCH!!

MADAM NAOMI: NO NEED TO DISCLOSE MY CREDENTIALS, SO LISTEN UP!
YOU DON'T BARGE IN HERE TELLING ME HOW TO RUN MY COUNTRY. I'VE SEEN IT ALL. SCREW YOU AND THE REGIME'S FANCY RULES. THE BOY STAYS WITH US.
MADAM NAOMI: THE REGIME NEVER BELIEVED IN THE ELI PROPHECY PRIOR TO THIS INCIDENT.
SOFIA: MADAM NAOMI...
MADAM NAOMI: NOW THEY WANNA SINK THEIR TEETH INTO OUR BUSINESS WITH NONSENSE POLITICS.
I'LL REPEAT MYSELF ONE MORE TIME, TAMASHII SANO IS OFF LIMITS.

YOU TELL THEM... IF THEY HAVE A PROBLEM WITH MY METHODS,
THEY KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME.
ANYTHING ELSE PUMPKIN?

VERY WELL MADAM, THAT WOULD BE ALL.
MY APOLOGIES, WHERE ARE MY MANNERS? DARK LORD MADAM NAOMI BAROQUE OF THE LEGENDARY "SISTERS OF ASH" SHOULD BE TREATED WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT.

I ALMOST FORGOT...
THE MEETING FOR MY REPORT WITH ALL BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND DARK LORDS PRESENT SHALL BE HELD HERE.
YEAH WHATEVER, YOU'RE ALL DISMISSED.
LORD LOCKLEAVE AND I WILL ESCORT YOU TO WHERE YOU'LL BE STAYING BEFORE THE MEETING HOLDS.
LEAD THE WAY, HANDSOME.
HEY JERK! WHO SAID YOU COULD SPEAK FOR ME?!!
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE BUSY OR NOTHING.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!!
MIKAEL...
IS EVERYTHING ALRIGHT?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
Tap Tap!
IF YOU SAY SO.

NOOOO!!!!
AND JUST WHEN I WAS GETTING ATTACHED TO THE CHARACTER.
UH... I'M A LITTLE FRIGHTENED TO ASK BUT
WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU READING?
THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK!!
OH BLOAK, HE'S BLEEDING AGAIN.
ITS CALLED "ZION", OH YOU'D LOVE IT!
A FICTIONAL STORY ABOUT THE HOT PRINCESS WARRIOR "ZION"
READ AS THE STRONGEST, SEXIEST, BUSTY, VOLUPTUOUS WITCH WARLOCK IN THE WORLD,
FIGHTS OFF THE EVILS OF BERMUDA FOR WHAT SHE BELIEVES IN... FREEDOM.
THAT'S THE BASIC GIST OF IT BUT ITS SO MUCH MORE, YOU SHOULD TRY IT, I GUARANTEE AMAZEMENT!
PROBABLY NOT, I'M MORE INTO MERLIN BOOKS, EVER HEARD OF THEM? I HAVE A LOT, USED TO BE MY FATHER'S.

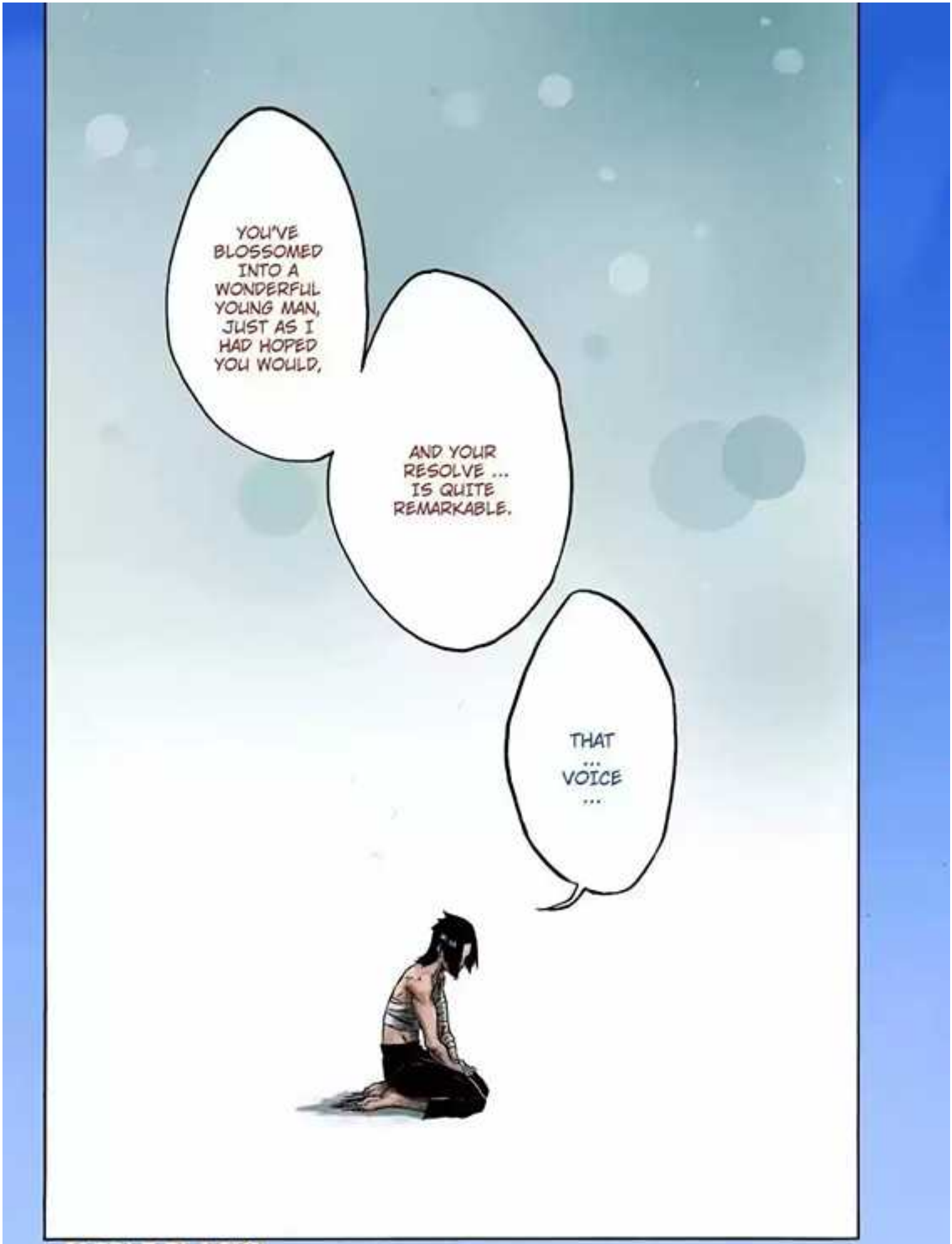
ANGELO SAYS, MERLIN POSSESSED THOSE HE CLAIMED PROPHETS TO WRITE HIS BOOKS AND PHILOSOPHIES,
I HEAR THERE ARE OVER A THOUSAND BOOKS OF MERLIN, ON SORCERY, HISTORY, SCIENCE, THE MIND AND EVEN SOME FICTIONAL STORIES WITH HIDDEN MESSAGES BEHIND THEM.
BUT THOSE ARE EXTREMELY VALUABLE AND HARD TO COME BY, NEVER SEEN ONE BEFORE, OR EVEN HEARD OF ONE...

HEH, YOU SILLY BOY ...
NO WAY ...
ZION "15" A BOOK OF MERLIN, THE SCARCE AND VALUABLE KIND.
ZION

IMPOSSIBLE, BUT WHERE DID YOU...
WILL THE BOTH OF YOU SHUT UP!!!
!!
IT'S TIME!!
ZION

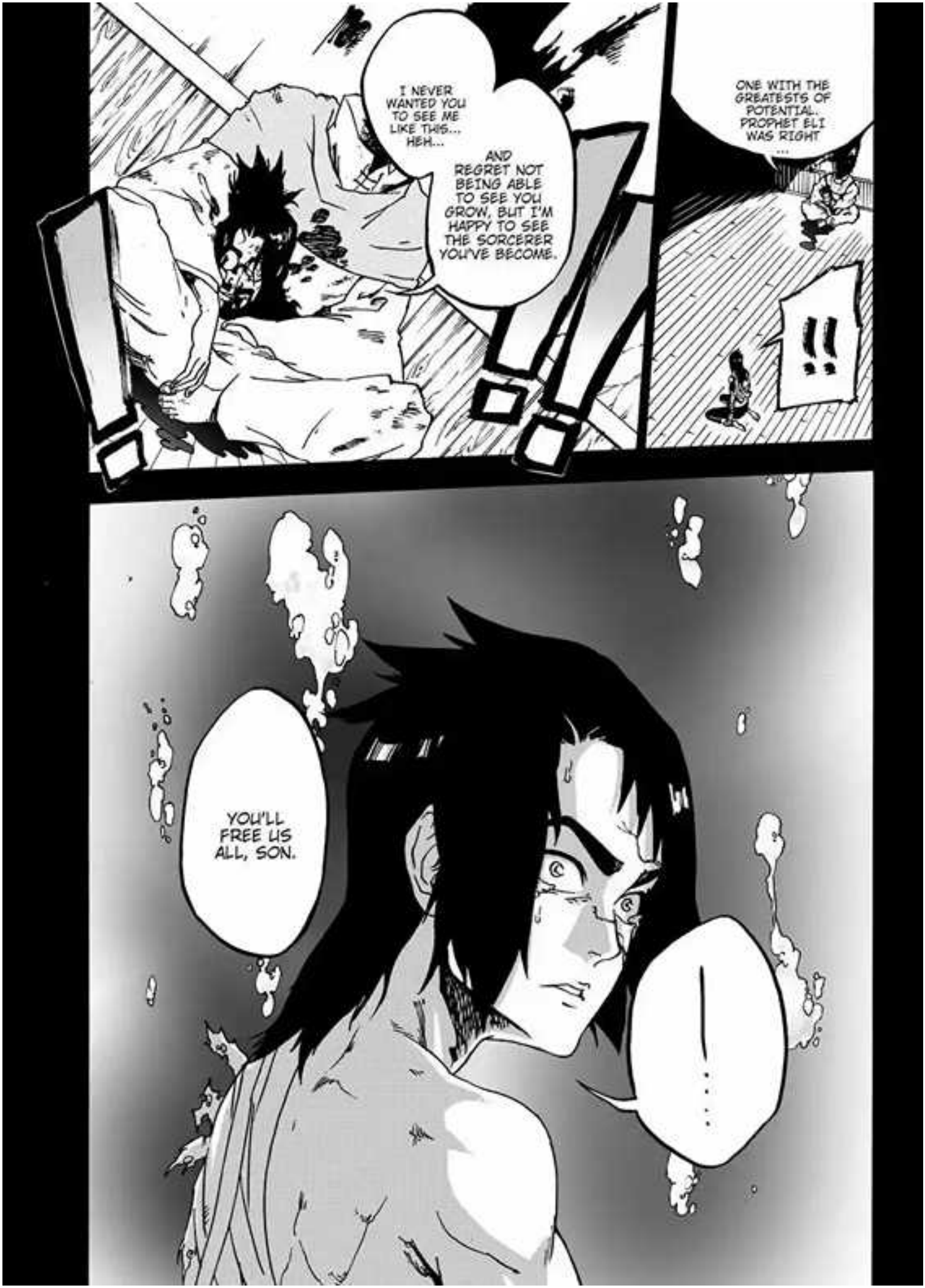
TIME TO SETTLE THE SCORE PUNKS!!
RYUZAKI...
[APPLE BLACK]
HOW DO WE LEAVE HERE ANYWAY?
HEH...
IT OPENED UP?!!
RT-GAS
WE DROP.
NO SERIOUSLY THOUGH...
?

AAAAH!!!
THIS TIME, I'VE GOT THIS IN THE BAG!!!
WHAT AWAITS SANO AND COMPANY DOWN BELOW?!
TO BE CONTINUED


YOU'VE BLOSSOMED INTO A WONDERFUL YOUNG MAN, JUST AS I HAD HOPED YOU WOULD,
AND YOUR RESOLVE ... IS QUITE REMARKABLE.
THAT ... VOICE ...

!!
ARGH!!-
AROUHS!!
WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING?!!
DO YOU NO LONGER RECOGNIZE MY VOICE? SANO...

!!
ARGH!!-
AROUHS!!
WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING?!!
DO YOU NO LONGER RECOGNIZE MY VOICE? SANO...


I NEVER WANTED YOU TO SEE ME LIKE THIS... HEH...
AND REGRET NOT BEING ABLE TO SEE YOU GROW, BUT I'M HAPPY TO SEE THE SORCERER YOU'VE BECOME.
ONE WITH THE GREATESTS OF POTENTIAL. PROPHET ELI WAS RIGHT ...
!!
YOU'LL FREE US ALL, SON.
!.....

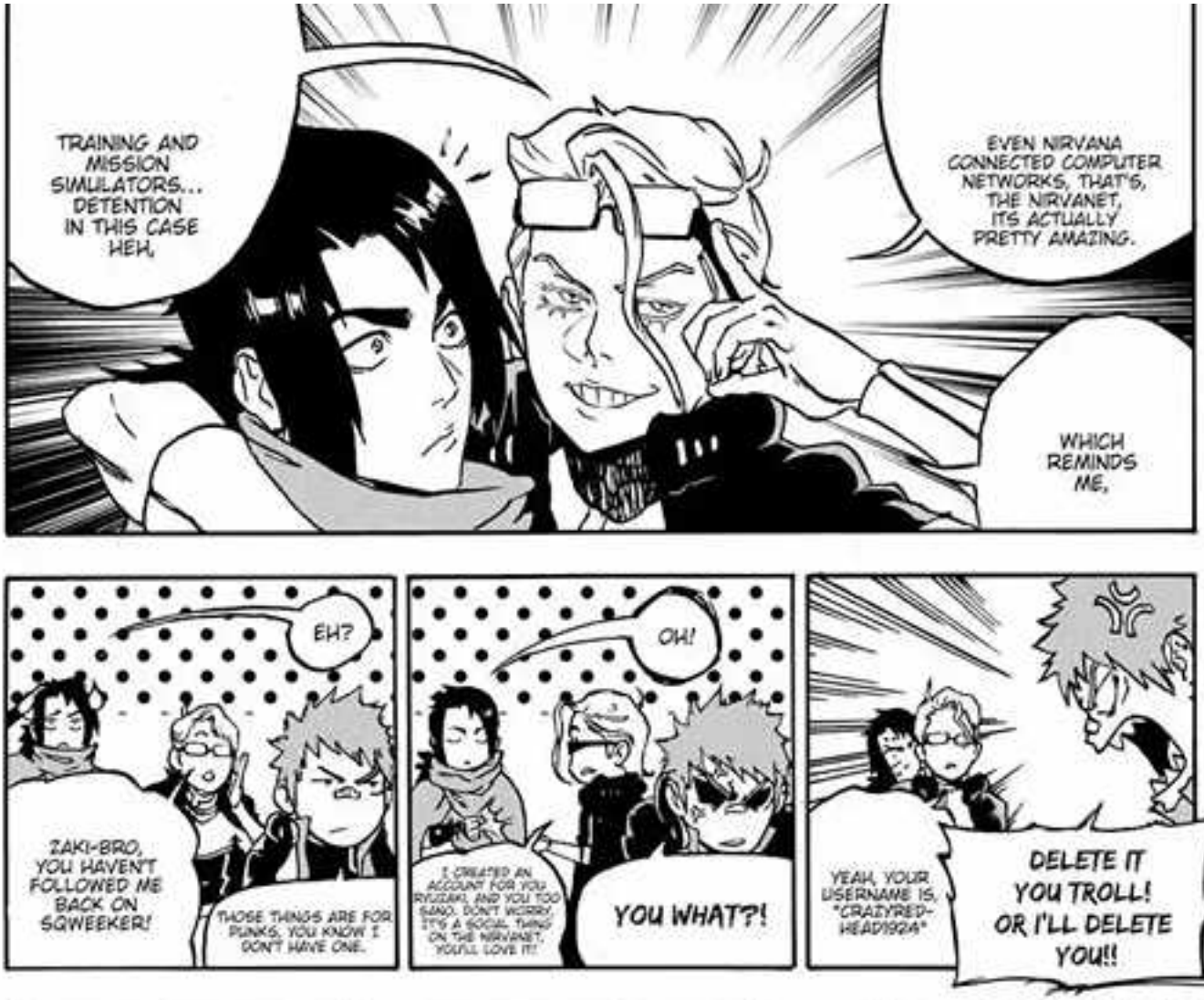
HUF!
HUF!
HUF!
HUF!
WELCOME TO DETENTION MY FRIEND!
WAKE UP TWERP!. YOU NOT GONNA CRASH THROUGH THE WHOLE SHOW AGAIN ARE YA?!
SYMON... RYUZAKI...
ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE NIGHTMARES EY?
YOU LOOK PRETTY OUT OF IT, HOW MANY FINGERS AM I HOLDING UP?
PLEASE!, TRINITY CAN'T HANDLE LITTLE BAD DREAMS?... WHATA WIMP.

SANO:
SOOOO,
LET ME GET
THIS STRAIGHT!,
WE'RE NOT
OUTSIDE NEWGARTH,
THIS ISN'T THE CITY,
THEN, WHERE ARE
WE?!!
SYMON:
OUR BODIES
ARE STILL BACK
IN NEWGARTH
BUT OUR MINDS
NOW RESIDE IN A
DIFFERENT DIMENSION,
ONE THAT MIRRORS
THE CITY IDENTICALLY,
THIS IS ALL JUST
AN ILLUSION CREATED
BY THE SPELL,
"NIRVANA".
SURELY,
YOU'VE
HEARD
OF IT.

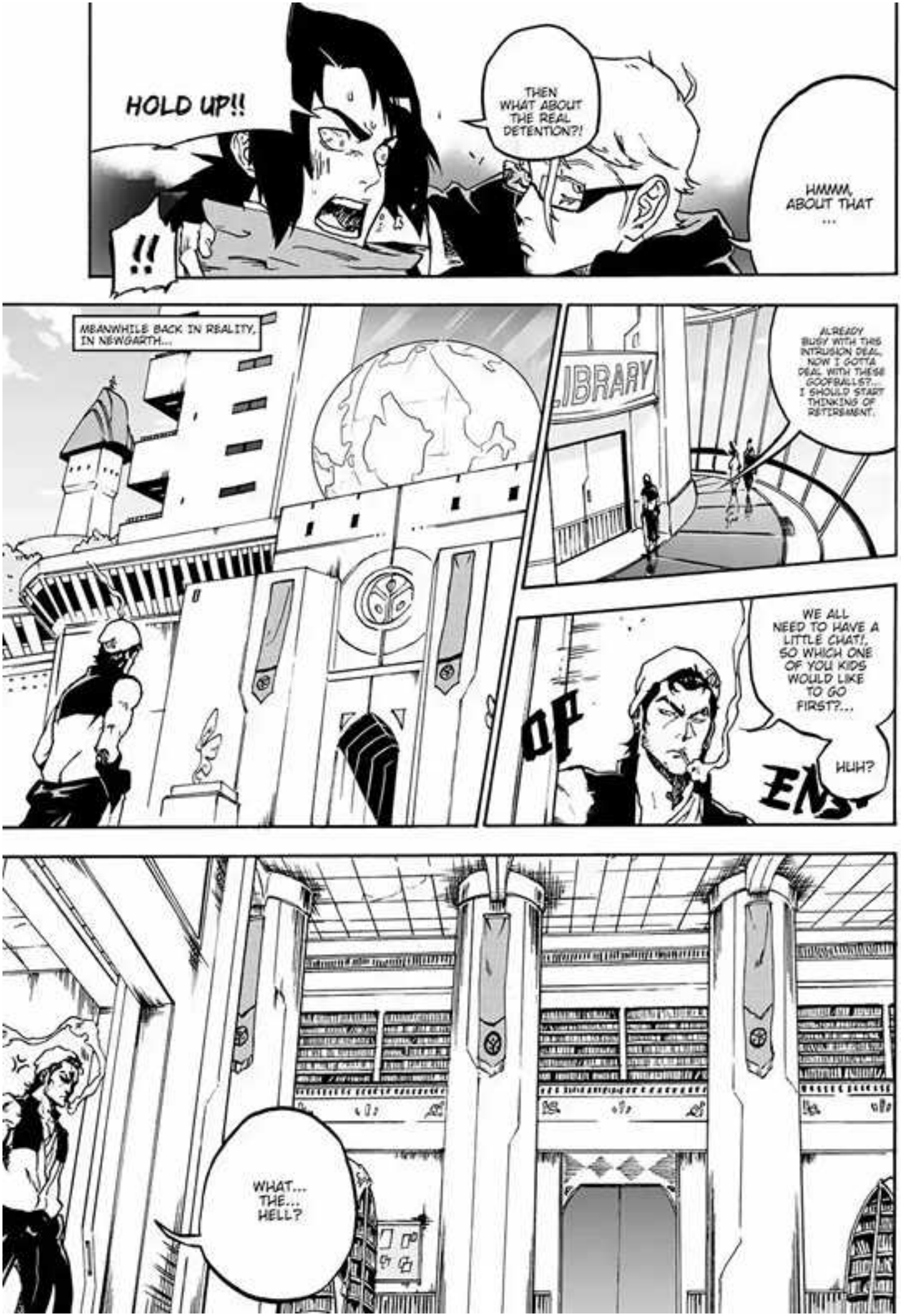
SANO:
NO WAY!,
WE'VE FALLEN
INTO AN ALTERNATE
REALM?
I'VE ONLY HEARD OF
NIRVANA, BUT I'VE
NEVER ACTUALLY
EXPERIENCED
FIRST HAND.
RYUZAKI:
AMATEUR.

BUT HOW DID WE
GET HERE?!
I HEAR NIRVANA IS A
SPELL THAT CAN ONLY
BE CASTED BY SPECIAL
SORCERERS AND
I DON'T IMAGINE ANY
OF US ARE OF
THAT CALIBER.
HEY!
WHAT'S THAT
SUPPOSED
TO MEAN?!,
UUU..
THIS NIRVANA
LOOKS SO REAL!,
AMAZING JOB
RYUZAKI!
LIAR!!
YOU'RE
JUST SAYIN'
THAT NOW!
NIRVANA OR NOT,
THE INSTITUTE'S
HOLDING ME BACK
IF YOU ASK ME,
ONCE I GRADUATE...
YAW'LL JUST WAIT!!
THE NAME
"RYUZAKI" WILL
BE FEARED
ALL ACROSS
THE FREAKIN'
CONTINENT!!
?

STILL THOUGH, THE LAST THING I REMEMBER WAS THE THREE OF US FALLING TO OUR DEATHS. SO WHO PUT US IN HERE?
MY MY SANO, YOU'VE BEEN KEPT FROM THE NEW WONDERS OF THE WORLD.
NIRVANA IS A SPELL THAT FABRICATES A NEW WORLD, A REALM WHERE ITS CREATOR IS ITS GOD. ITS THE GREATEST SPELL EVERY SORCERER HAS THE POTENTIAL TO CAST.
IT'S NOT LIMITED TO ANY SINGLE TRIBES AND IS ONLY ACHIEVED AFTER COMPLETE SYNCHRONIZATION, A PERFECT MOMENT WHERE THEY ARE AT PEACE WITH...
MIND, BODY AND SOUL, WHEN THEIR IMPULSE LEVELS SERENADE THE BLOOD IN THEIR VEINS.
THEY CALL IT "ENLIGHTENMENT".
VERY FEW ARE ENLIGHTENED, SOME NEVER GET TO BE, NOT EVEN SOME DARK LORDS,
AND THAT'S BECAUSE IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH TRAINING OR EXPERIENCE BUT MORE OF AN UNDERSTANDING.
AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT EXACTLY?
?
DON'T YOU THINK IF I KNEW, I WOULD BE ENLIGHTENED AND HAVE ACHIEVED NIRVANA?
GRAB!
BUT!! OVER THE YEARS RESEARCH ON NIRVANA BROUGHT ABOUT NEW DEVELOPMENTS, WITH THE HELP OF THE BLACK FRUITS, NIRVANA CAN BE CREATED BY THE TECHNOLOGY OF THIS NEW GENERATION.
WHILE NOT AS STRONG AS THE NATURAL KIND BY SORCERERS, IT STILL DOES THE TRICK, AND IS USED FOR ALL SORTS OF SIMULATION, RATHER THAN JUST IN BATTLE, FOR INSTANCE...
HERE WE GO AGAIN, MORE NOISE.


TRAINING AND MISSION SIMULATORS... DETENTION IN THIS CASE HEH.
EVEN NIRVANA CONNECTED COMPUTER NETWORKS, THAT'S, THE NIRVANET, ITS ACTUALLY PRETTY AMAZING.
WHICH REMINDS ME,
EH?
ZAKI-BRO, YOU HAVEN'T FOLLOWED ME BACK ON SQWEEKER!
THOSE THINGS ARE FOR PUNKS, YOU KNOW I DON'T HAVE ONE.
OH!
I CREATED AN ACCOUNT FOR YOU RYUZAKI, AND YOU TOO SANO. DON'T WORRY IT'S A SOCIAL THING ON THE NIRVANET, YOU'LL LOVE IT!
YOU WHAT?!
YEAH, YOUR USERNAME IS, "CRAIYRED-HEAD1924"
DELETE IT YOU TROLL! OR I'LL DELETE YOU!!
C'MON, CALM DOWN RYUZAKI, I THINK THE NAME FITS PREFECTLY, HEH.
SYMON...
IF WE *ARE* UNDER THE SPELL "NIRVANA", THEN WE HAVE EVEN BIGGER ISSUES THAN I THOUGHT.
I REMEMBER ANGELO TELLING ME THIS... ANYONE DELETED HERE, BECOMES A VEGETABLE IN REALITY...

I DON'T THINK BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND WOULD EVER ALLOW THIS...
OKAY YOU GOT ME! SMARTY PANTS, CAN'T RUN NOTHING PASS THE OL' TRINITY EH?..HEH, YOU'RE RIGHT!, I SORTA LEFT OUT SOME DETAILS.
THIS ISN'T EXACTLY DETENTION, I HACKED IN AND PROGRAMMED THIS NIRVANA. I ALSO GOT THE BLACK BALLS TO DRAG US ALL INTO SIMULATION SECTOR.
IT WAS THE ONLY WAY INTO BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND'S SIMULATION CHAMBER. SO, WE'RE HERE ILLEGALLY, BUT IT'LL BE FUN.
H-HEY... COULDN'T WE GET EXPELLED FOR THIS?!
YEAH, PRETTY MUCH.
ANGELO WOULD BE SO DISAPPOINTED. HOW COME THE SECURITY FELLOWSHIP DIDN'T NOTICE?
WELL, LET'S JUST SAY ...
IT'S EASIER TO GET IN UNDETECTED IN A BLACK BALL THAN AS LAME STUDENTS FROM THE INSTITUTE.
DON'T WORRY, RYUZAKI AND I DO THIS ALL THE TIME AND WE'VE STILL NEVER BEEN CAUGHT.
GENIUS! AM I RIGHT?! OR AM I RIGHT?!


HOLD UP!!
!!
THEN WHAT ABOUT THE REAL DETENTION?!
HMMM, ABOUT THAT ...
MEANWHILE BACK IN REALITY, IN NEWGARTH...
LIBRARY
ALREADY BUSY WITH THIS INTRUSION DEAL, NOW I GOTTA DEAL WITH THESE GOOFBALLS?... I SHOULD START THINKING OF RETIREMENT.
WE ALL NEED TO HAVE A LITTLE CHAT, SO WHICH ONE OF YOU KIDS WOULD LIKE TO GO FIRST?...
HUH?
END
WHAT... THE... HELL?

SLAM!!
THE LITTLE DIPSHITS THINK I'M STUPID ...

SANO:
AAAARGH!!!!!
YOU REPLACED US WITH JANITOR EQUIPMENT ?!!!!!
SYMON:
I KNOW, RIGHT?, AND THEY'RE SO IDENTICAL! IT'S MIND NUMBING!
EXCEPT FOR RYUZAKI THOUGH, ALL I COULD FIND WAS A TRASH CAN. DID MY BEST, BUT I'M NOT A MAGICIAN Y'KNOW?

SCARY!! MIKAEL WILL KILL US!!
RELAX, NOTHING HE HASN'T TRIED BEFORE, BESIDES HE'LL NEVER NOTICE. YOUR WELCOME.
WHAT'S THE WORST THAT COULD HAPPEN? WE GET EXPELLED AND SENTENCED, THATS ALL.
YOURE NOT HELPING...

IT DOESN'T MATTER, WE'RE A UNIT NOW...
ARE THE BOTH OF YOU GONNA KEEP BLABIN'T LIKE LITTLE GIRLS THROUGHOUT?, JEEZ, SHUT UP!!
!!
WE HAVE EACHOTHER'S BACKS FROM NOW ON.
LETS NOT FORGET WHY WE CAME HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE!
TURNS
SKREEEEEEEEE---
COME TO THINK OF IT, WHY ARE WE HERE?--
?!
IS... THAT...
RYUZAKI?!
HEH...

DON'T WORRY SANO, WE DIDN'T GO BACK IN TIME OR SOMETHING THAT RIDICULOUS, BUT ...
THIS NIRVANA REALM IS PROGRAMMED AFTER RYUZAKI'S MEMORY, 6 YEARS AGO.
?!
...
6 YEARS HUH? THAT'S A YOUNG RYUZAKI?, HE'S IGNORING US.
WHY IS HE RUNNING ALL OF A SUDDEN?! AND WHY ARE WE FOLLOW-ING?!
YOU'LL SEE SOON ENOUGH!
ALL THAT'S GONNA CHANGE!
ON THIS DAY, I FAILED EVERYONE!
BUT!!
TA
TA
TA

UNLIKE NIRVANA BY SORCERERS, PROGRAMMED NIRVANAS CAN'T BE ALTERED FROM WITHIN. THIS NIRVANA IS PROGRAMMED NOT TO UNDO THE SPELL UNTIL A CERTAIN TASK IS COMPLETED PLUS WE CAN'T INTERACT WITH ANY BEINGS, EXCEPT THE TASK.
TA TA TA TA TA TA
WHAT TASK?!
JUST FOLLOW THE LITTLE RUBY.
!!
CAUTION
DO NOT CROSS
WELCOME TO OLDGARTH
NO WAY ...

WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
CAUTION
RROO OAA RRR!!!!
WHAT WAS THAT?...
SYMON! WAIT UP! WHAT'S GOING ON?!
BEWARE
DO NOT CROS

START GIVING ME SOME ANSWERS DAMMIT!
BEAUT-IFUL
RYUZAKI?
...
SYMON.
WHAT HAPPENED HERE, LITTLE RYUZAKI IS...
TOO MANY QUESTIONS, RELAX SANO, I'LL EXPLAIN IN SEC
SANO: WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?!
AND WHO'S SHE?! WHO DID THIS TO THEM?!
BRACE YOURSELF, BEAUTIFUL ISN'T IT? THE ONLY THING PROGRAMMED TO INTERACT WITH US THAT'S THE TASK.
SYMON... YOU'RE SENSE OF BEAUTY IS PRETTY WARPED ...

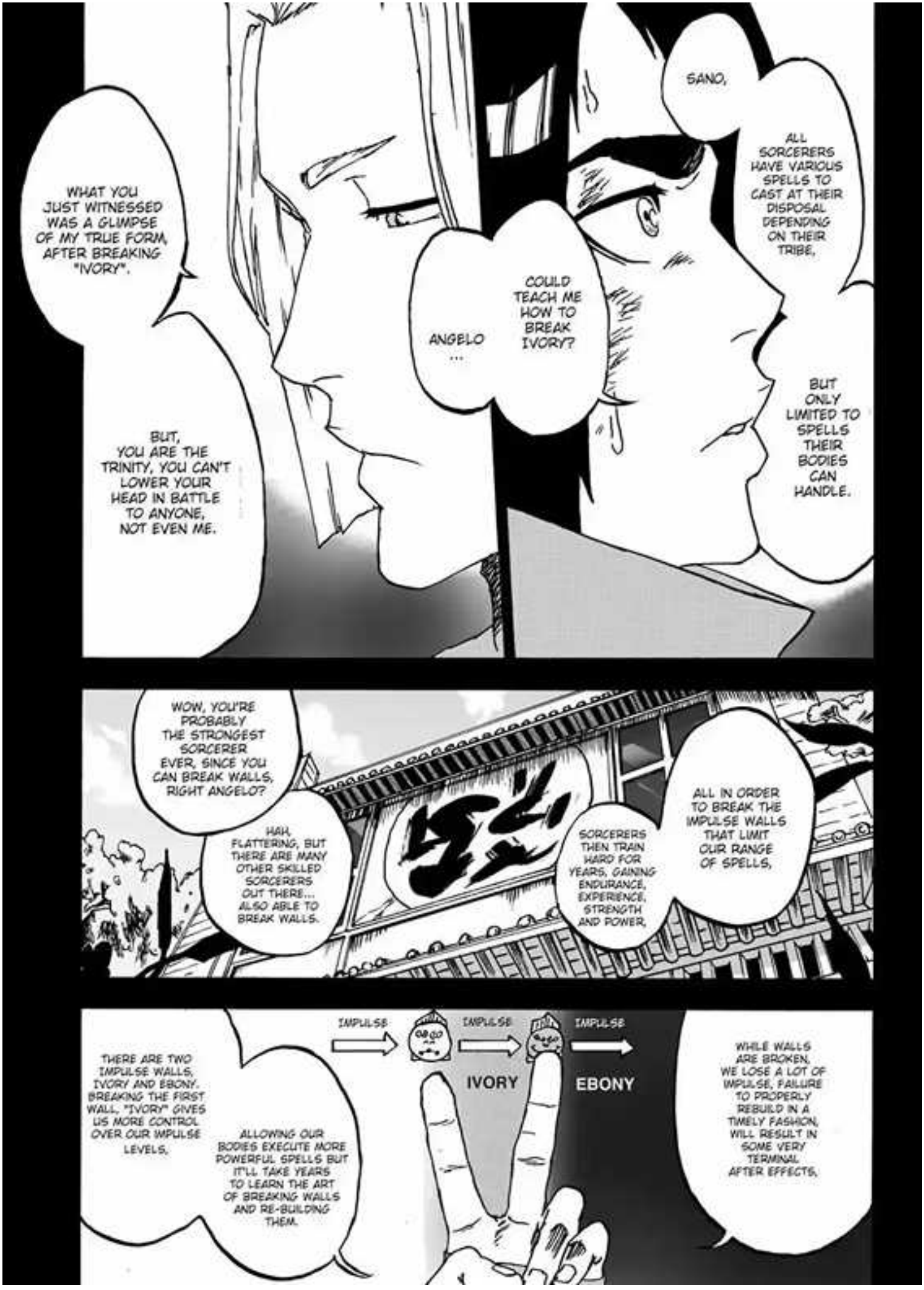
SYMON: CERBEROOT, A BLACK BOTTOM EXPERIMENT GONE WRONG.
FU FU FU
FU FU FU FU FU
FU FU FU FU
KRRRRRRRR!!!
I TOLD YOU, I CAN'T DO ANYTHING UNTIL THE TASK IS COMPLETE.
IT'S IMPULSE LEVELS ARE CRAZY!
FIX THIS!
IF ALL THIS ALREADY HAPPENED THEN THIS CHANGES NOTHING!, ITS NOT LIKE IF HE DEFEATS THAT THING, THE EVENTS WOULD CHANGE,
NONE OF THIS IS REASONABLE, RYUZAKI'S MIND COULD BE DELETED FOR NO REASON AT ALL!!
FOR THE LAST TIME!, SHUT UP!!

NO ONE SHOULD INTERFERE, HE'S ALL MINE!!
SUMMON! RED X BATONS!
OH MERLIN'S NO! YOU HEARD THE MAN! HE'LL HAVE MY HEAD ON A PLATE, I'D LAY OFF AS WELL AND LET HIM HAVE HIS FUN.
YOU'RE NOT GONNA HELP?
YOU COULD BE HIS LUCKY CHARM, RYUJAKI HAS NEVER DEFEATED THE MUTANT BEFORE.
WAIT A MINUTE! HOW DO YOU GUYS GET OUT OF NIRVANA IF HE NEVER WINS?! AND A MUTANT?
I SAID, RYUJAKI NEVER DEFEATS CERBEROOT, I NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THE TASK NOT GETTING COMPLETED.
AND YES, MUTANT. MOST ANIMALS AND PLANTS HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY BLACK JUST AS HUMANS, TURNING THEM INTO TOOLS OF SORCERY AS WELL.
SOME SIDE EFFECTS ARE ANATOMY ALTERATIONS BECOMING MUTANTS, EVEN SOME VERY INTERESTING HUMANS UNDERGO THESE ALTERATIONS.
IN THIS CASE, WE HAVE THIS BIG BEAUTIFUL BEAST FOR A MUTANT.
SANO: I'M STILL CONFUSED.

ROO
OO
AAAA
AARR
RRR!!
!!
FLOU...

...
BETTER JUICE UP ASSHOLE! YOU'RE GONNA NEED IT!
SWOOOAAARRM
YOU HEAR ME ?!!
BREAKING YOUR DAMN WALLS WILL NOT CHANGE THE OUTCOME OF THIS BATTLE!
I FORGOT TO MENTION, CERBEROOT HAS MASTERED THE FIRST IMPULSE WALL, "IVORY".
THE SACRED IMPULSE WALLS?
ANGELO TOLD ME A LOT ABOUT THE WALLS OF IMPULSE...

HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
ANG-ELO... I CAN'T... GO- ON, ANYMORE.
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
AND THEN, YOU DIE, IT'S THAT SIMPLE, SANO.


SANO,
ALL SORCERERS HAVE VARIOUS SPELLS TO CAST AT THEIR DISPOSAL DEPENDING ON THEIR TRIBE,
BUT ONLY LIMITED TO SPELLS THEIR BODIES CAN HANDLE.
ANGELO ...
COULD TEACH ME HOW TO BREAK IVORY?
WHAT YOU JUST WITNESSED WAS A GLIMPSE OF MY TRUE FORM, AFTER BREAKING "IVORY".
BUT, YOU ARE THE TRINITY, YOU CAN'T LOWER YOUR HEAD IN BATTLE TO ANYONE, NOT EVEN ME.
WOW, YOU'RE PROBABLY THE STRONGEST SORCERER EVER, SINCE YOU CAN BREAK WALLS, RIGHT ANGELO?
HAH, FLATTERING, BUT THERE ARE MANY OTHER SKILLED SORCERERS OUT THERE... ALSO ABLE TO BREAK WALLS.
SORCERERS THEN TRAIN HARD FOR YEARS, GAINING ENDURANCE, EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND POWER,
ALL IN ORDER TO BREAK THE IMPULSE WALLS THAT LIMIT OUR RANGE OF SPELLS,
IMPULSE
IMPULSE
IMPULSE
IVORY
EBONY
THERE ARE TWO IMPULSE WALLS, IVORY AND EBONY. BREAKING THE FIRST WALL, "IVORY" GIVES US MORE CONTROL OVER OUR IMPULSE LEVELS.
ALLOWING OUR BODIES EXECUTE MORE POWERFUL SPELLS BUT IT'LL TAKE YEARS TO LEARN THE ART OF BREAKING WALLS AND RE-BUILDING THEM.
WHILE WALLS ARE BROKEN, WE LOSE A LOT OF IMPULSE, FAILURE TO PROPERLY REBUILD IN A TIMELY FASHION, WILL RESULT IN SOME VERY TERMINAL AFTER EFFECTS.

I STRONGLY ADVISE AGAINST IT.
WHAT IF I TRY TO CAST A SPELL BEYOND A WALL I HAVEN'T BROKEN YET?
THEORETICALLY, YES.
TRYING IVORY LEVELED SPELLS WITHOUT BREAKING THE WALL COULD WORK SINCE THEY ARE STILL EXECUTABLE SPELLS,
BUT IT'S VERY DANGEROUS AND IT COULD BE HEAVILY FATAL, YOU COULD LOSE YOUR LIFE IN RETURN.
SAME CONCEPT APPLIES FOR THE SECOND AND VASTLY STRONGER WALL, "EBONY".
EBONY CAN ONLY BE BROKEN AFTER BREAKING IVORY AND IT TAKES EVEN LONGER TO MASTER, SOME SORCERERS NEVER DO.
THE SORCERERS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED EBONY ARE OF RANK "DARK LORD" AND ABOVE, MOST REGULAR LORDS SUCH AS MYSELF HAVE ONLY BROKEN IVORY.
HMPH... I'M SURE YOU CAN TAKE EM' ON ANYWAY. EY ANGELO?
MAKE NO MISTAKE, WALL EBONY IS MUCH MORE POWERFUL THAN WALL IVORY AND ALLOWS SORCERERS DO THINGS THAT ARE UNFATHOMABLE.
SO SANO, PLEASE LISTEN CAREFULLY,
FOR YOUR SAFETY, AFTER YOU LEAVE THIS ISLAND...

IF YOU CANNOT BREAK ANY WALLS YET AND YOU ENGAGE IN BATTLE WITH A SORCERER WHO CAN
...

!!
PLEASE,
RUN.

SYMON, PLEASE TELL ME RYUZAKI CAN AT LEAST BREAK IVORY TOO?!
GRABS !!!
EVER HEARD OF A STUDENT OF BLACK BOTTOM BREAKING WALLS?, APART FROM LORDS AND THOSE OF HIGHER RANK, EVEN MOST REGULAR CLOAKS CAN'T BREAK ANY WALLS, NOT TO TALK OF A STUDENT...
BY THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE YOU ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER, DON'T YOU? HEHE...
I DON'T NEED TO BREAK NO STUPID WALLS. OKAY SUCKAS?!
FEAST YOUR EYES ON MY BEAST MODE YOU LITTLE TERMITES!
MY BATONS ARE ALL FIRED UP! AND READY TO GO!!!

YOU BROUGHT ME A LOT OF PAIN OVER THE YEARS YOU SHIT STAIN. BUT NOT TODAY!!
TODAY, I GOT THREE WORDS FOR YA!!
BRING IT PUNK!!
RR RO OO OO OA AA AA AR RRR !!!!
CERBEROOT BREAKS "IVORY"!!!
TO BE CONTINUED

!!
VVVVVVV
?!
POOF!
HE TELEPORTED...
TO BE CONTINUED

I'M DONE AND READY TO GO ...
HAPPY?
YEAH, BUT I'M SURE ...
THEY'D BE HAPPIER TO TO SEE YOU.

LILY
...
C'MON
NEON ...
WE DON'T
WANT TO KEEP
THE LITTLE
MONSTERS
WAITING
TOO LONG.

BO -OM
RRROOO AA AAA RGH!! !!!
HUF!
HUF!
HUF!
C'MON! C'MON!

FLIP
BAS-
TARD!

EAT THIS!
HUH?!! MY BATON?!
RAA RRH!
SNATCH!
?!

URGH!

RYUZAKI!!
SYMON!, ARE YOU EVEN PAYING ATTENTION?! WE CAN'T JUST SIT BACK AND DO NOTHING!
?

OH, HOW RUDE OF ME, CARE TO ENJOY THE SHOW WITH SOME KALIBON GUM?
PROGRAMMED TO TASTE LIKE THE REAL THING, BETTER THAN POPCORN RIGHT?
NOM NOM NOM
I'VE HAD IT, IM GOING IN!
SANO ...
YOU UNDERESTIMATE RYUZAKI-BRO PROFOUNDLY. WITH A LOT OF DEMONS TO EXERCISE,
HE'S NOT BACKING OFF THAT EASY.
HE CAN BE QUITE STUBBORN.

FU FU FU
WAS THAT ALL YOU GOT? PUNK!
!!
!!
RRR
HEH!
UUUUU

WHAT THE-
ROAAA RRRR GHH!! !!!!
THAT'S ENOUGH. THERES NO REASON TO DO THIS BY HIMSELF.
OUCH.
YOU WERE SAYING...
NO REASON?

EVER ONCE ASK YOURSELF WHY THIS IS SO IMPORTANT TO HIM?
SYMON...
WAIT!, I'M-- I'M NOT DONE... YET!
HUF
HUF
HUF
SYMON: WHY HE'D WILLINGLY GO UP AGAINST ANYONE...
HUF
HUF
HUF
CLIN-CHES!
SYMON: WHY HE'LL RISK ANY AND EVERYTHING.

SYMON: RED DIAMOND IN THE DIRT ...
"RUBY"
NO FRIENDS, NO FAMILY, NOTHING... RUBY WAS ALL ALONE...
UNTIL SHE FOUND HIM.
FLOUREENE MERCURY.
HEY YOU!
THATS HER OVER THERE HUH? ...
RYUZAKI CALLED HER "FLOU" EARLIER.

FLOU WAS A PROMISING CLOAK OF BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND, A SORCERER OF THE ELITE MERCURY FAMILY.
STRONG IN SPIRIT WITH THE PERFECT BLEND OF BEAUTY AND STRENGTH, NOT JUST IN POWER BUT IN HEART.
SHE INSPIRED THE VERY BEING HE IS NOW, GAVE HIM PURPOSE.
om
om
om
EVERYONE AT THE ORPHANAGE,
BRINGING HIM TO ORPHANAGE, WHERE SHE WAS AN INSPIRING FIGURE NOT JUST TO RUBY BUT TO ...
haha!
HAHA!!
HAHA!!
HA!
HE WAS NO LONGER ALONE.
haha!!!
HA!
HAHA
haha!!!
HAHA
HUH?
FLOU BECAME THE FIRST FAMILY HE EVER HAD.
HEY FLOUREENE IS HERE!!
LOOK!, SHE'S WITH HER SISTER TOO!
WHATA CUTIE.
SISTER?!

ALRIGHT! WE FINALLY GET TO MEET HER
SHE LOOKS JUST LIKE FLOU-REENB!!
WITH PINK HAIR!!
FLOU'S SIS? DOESN'T SEEM LIKE MUCH...
FREAKING POOR, COMPARED TO FLOU.
HEY! APE GIRL! YOU GOT A SPEECH IMPEDIMENT, NAME PLEASE?!
MY NAME IS NEONA, "NEONA MERCURY", NICE TO MEET YOU.
!!!

NOW DON'T BE SHY NEONA, THE LOUD MOUTH IS RUBY. HE DOESN'T MEAN TO BE A JACKASS, RIGHT RUBY?
NEONA HUH ...
YOU LOOK PRETTY WEAK TO ME.
RUBY!! WHATS THE MATTER WITH YOU?! APOLOGIZE!
FORGET IT!!!
FORGET WHAT?!
ITS NOT MY FAULT SHE'S A ROBOT!
THATS MY SISTER! YOU A-HOLE!
ARRGHH!! LET GO APE LADY! AARGH!!
OKAY OKAY, I'M SORRY! HAPPY NOW!
POW!

FROM THEN ON OUT ...
ZION
NEON ALWAYS WANTED TO PROVE RUBY WRONG OVER HIS REMARKS.
AND SO, SHE CAME HERE TO EXPLORE "OLD GARTH" IN RUINS EVEN THOUGH THIS PLACE WAS OFF LIMITS AFTER THE DISASTER.
SAME DISASTER THAT LED TO SEVERAL FAILED EXPERIMENTS.
WITH THE HELP OF LORD ANGELO AND PROFESSOR MIKAEL'S SPECIAL OPS FORCE "ONYX", THEY MANAGED TO CONTAIN THE SITUATION BUT THE DAMAGE WAS ALREADY DONE.
OLD GARTH BECAME A BOULEVARD OF THE BROKEN. IT LOST EVERYTHING. EVEN THOUGH THEY SECURED THE PERIMETER AND PUT IT ONLOCKDOWN, RUMORS SOARED THE STREETS, RUMORS OF A SURVIVING BABY BEAST.
CERBEROOT.
CORRECT! THOUGH AS I STATED, IT WAS JUST A RUMOR, SOME BELIEVE, SOME DON'T. AFTER OVERHEARING SOME STRANGER, NEON DECIDED TO PROVE HER BRAVERY TO RUBY.
SHE WENT OFF TO OLD GARTH AND RUBY JUST LAUGHED AT HER AND ONCE FLOUREENE RETURNED TO NEWS.. WELL YOU COULD IMAGINE HER DISAPPOINTMENT IN RUBY..
NEON HAD BEEN EXPOSED TO THE WRATH OF THE BEAST, FLOUREEN TRIED TO SAVE HER SISTER BUT...

FLOUREENE NOW RESIDES IN THE "ASCLEPIUS", THE FELLOWSHIP OF HEALTH.
SHE'S BEEN IN A COMA EVER SINCE ...
AND HER CONDITION KEEPS DETERIO-RATING,

I WONDERED WHO THE OTHER BEATEN GIRL WAS...
LOOKS TO ME NEON WAS TRYING TO GET RUBY TO ACKNOWLEDGE HER.
DIDN'T MATTER, RUBY GOT HERE AND SHARED THE SPOILS. THAT WAS WHEN WE FOLLOWED HIM EARLIER.

HE WAS DEVASTATED, HELPLESS AND ONCE AGAIN.. ALONE. LUCKILY FOR ALL OF THEM...
ROOOAAAHHH!!!!!
THEY WERE SAVED BY
THE GREAT DRAGON RYUZAKI ...
IT APPEARED OUTTA NO WHERE AND DISAPPEARED RIGHT AFTER WITHOUT A TRACE, LIKE RUBY'S VERY OWN GUARDIAN ANGEL. EVER SINCE THAT DAY RYUZAKI BRO HAS ALWAYS WANTED TO EMULATE THAT AURA. HENCE HIS NAME CHANGE.
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HE COULDN'T SAVE ANYONE THAT DAY SO HE SWORE TO GROW STRONGER, TO BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO SAVE EVERYONE,
OVERCOMING DEATH AND ALL OF HIS FRIENDS, VERY NOBLE OF HIM.
THAT'S WHY THE RYUZAKI DRAGON IS NOT PRO-GRAMMED INTO THIS NIRVANA.
WE ALREADY GOT OUR VERY OWN OF RYUZAKI.
THAT'S WHY HE WANTS TO BECOME THE STRONGEST CLOAK EVER, TO LIVE HONORING "FLOUREENE".
HE SEEMS TO BLAME NEON FOR ALL OF THIS, THEY DON'T GET ALONG TO THIS DAY, WELL IT'S NOT LIKE HE GETS ALONG WITH ANYONE, BARELY GETS ALONG WITH YOUR'S TRULY.
OH REA-LLY.
YOU'RE WRONG.
HUF
SYMON: HEY WAIT, DID YOU LISTEN TO A WORD I JUST SAID?! DON'T INTERFERE SANO, IF YOU DO, RYUZAKI'S JUST GONNA GET DETENTION ALL OVER AGAIN TILL HE FACES HIS DEMONS ALONE,
HUF
HUF
FU FU FU FU FU
EVEN IF HIS MIND GETS DELETED TRYING.

PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT,
BUT JUDGING FROM YOUR FINE STORY, I'D SAY HE'S MORE AFRAID OF BEING ALONE AGAIN. DON'T YOU THINK?
CAN'T MOVE ANY-LONGER ...
I GET IT NOW.

WE GET IT, YOU'RE A TELEPORTER, THAT'S HOW YOU DODGED MY ATTACKS FROM BEFORE...
SANO YOU TWERP!! I TOLD YOU, HE'S MINE, OR ARE YOU DEAF?!!

SYMON TOLD ME WHAT HAPPENED HERE, WITH YOU, FLOUREENE AND NEON.
YOU ONLY WANT FREEDOM,
RIGHT? ... RUBY.
FU
FUU FUU
SYMON, THAT LOUD MOUTH...
MY APOLOGIES RYUZAKI, BUT I CAN'T RESIST TELLING A GREAT TALE. NO MATTER HOW TRAGIC.
SMUG SON OF A.. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THAT LATER...
I SUPPOSE HE WOULD GET BACK AT ME..BUT TILL THEN MY FRIEND, THINGS ARE LOOKING INTERESTING.

IT'S RYUZAKI TO YOU! GOT IT TWERP?! NOW STAY OUTTA MY FIGHT!!
I ALSO KNOW YOU DON'T BLAME NEON...
YOU BLAME YOURSELF.
?!

AND THIS IS YOUR PUNISHMENT FOR YOU, BY YOU.
RE-LIVING TRAGIC MOMENTS LIKE THIS ONE
OVER AND OVER IS PUNISHMENT, I KNOW THE FEELING, WE'RE NOT THAT DIFFERENT YOU AND I...
I GET NIGHTMARES...
HORRORS THAT LOOP TO CORRUPT MY SOUL.
BUT I DEAL WITH THEM MY OWN WAY.
BUT YOU...

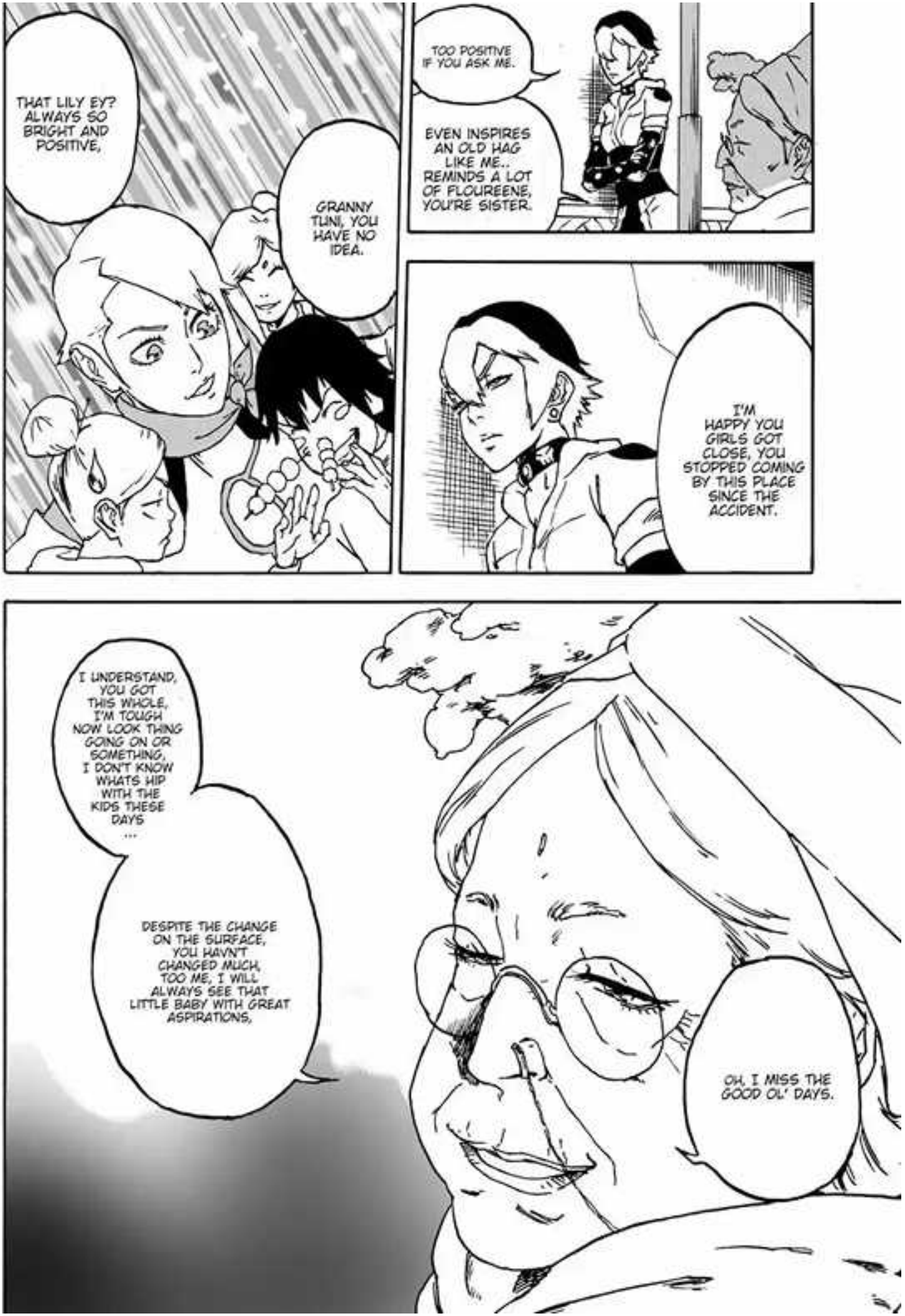
!!
YOU WANT TO BE CORRUPTED, FOR YOU, THIS IS YOUR TRUE DETENTION.
I WOULDN'T STOP YOU FROM HANDLING THINGS YOUR WAY BUT I REFUSE TO JUST SIT BACK, DON'T WORRY... I WILL NOT STAND IN YOUR WAY
FU FU FU FU FU FU
FU FU FU FU FU FU

I'M JUST GONNA STAND STILL.
EH?!
TECHNICALLY, I'VE NOT INTERFERED, THE BOULDER WAS GONNA HIT ME AND I STOPPED IT, SO... YOU'RE STILL ON.

?
SANO... HE WANTS ME TO...
SMART APPROACH SANO, WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF IT? YOU CHEERLEADER YOU, WOULD HAVE BEEN PERFECT IF YOU WERE A BABE THOUGH, OH WELL...
SO, GO ON, WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?, SAVE ME!

GET IT RIGHT THIS TIME.
HEH...
TWERP.
THANKS. I NEEDED THAT.
DON'T SWEAT IT--
ROOA AAR!!
EITHER WAY...
CAN'T SAVE YOU IF YOU IN MY WAY.

BLACK BOTTOM ISLAND, JEGUN DISTRICT.
SUCH WONDERFUL WEATHER.
IT'S ALWAYS GREAT WHEN YOU GIRLS COME BY TO VOLUNTEER HERE AT THE ORPHANAGE WITH LITTLE OLD GRANNY TUNI.
IT SERVES AS GREAT INSPIRATION FOR THE CHILDREN. THEY DON'T FEEL LIKE THE WEEDS OF EDEN.
IT'S ALSO GOOD TO SEE YOU'RE DOING ALRIGHT NEONA?
!
STILL THE QUITE QUIET ONE I SEE... HAH.


THAT LILY EY? ALWAYS SO BRIGHT AND POSITIVE,
GRANNY TUNI, YOU HAVE NO IDEA.
TOO POSITIVE IF YOU ASK ME.
EVEN INSPIRES AN OLD HAG LIKE ME.. REMINDS A LOT OF FLOUREENE, YOU'RE SISTER.
I'M HAPPY YOU GIRLS GOT CLOSE, YOU STOPPED COMING BY THIS PLACE SINCE THE ACCIDENT.
I UNDERSTAND, YOU GOT THIS WHOLE, I'M TOUGH NOW LOOK THING GOING ON OR SOMETHING, I DON'T KNOW WHATS HIP WITH THE KIDS THESE DAYS ...
DESPITE THE CHANGE ON THE SURFACE, YOU HAVN'T CHANGED MUCH, TOO ME, I WILL ALWAYS SEE THAT LITTLE BABY WITH GREAT ASPIRATIONS,
OH, I MISS THE GOOD OL' DAYS.

HOW'S RUBY? HEARD HE GOES BY RYUZAKI NOW. HAVN'T SEEN HIM FOR A WHILE.
DON'T CARE.
!
YOU GUYS USED TO BE SUCH AN ENTERTAINING BUNCH.
TRUE STRENGTH IS NOT ALWAYS PHYSICAL,
IT CAN LIE WITHIN THE ABILITY TO FORGIVE THOSE WHO HAVE WRONGED YOU ...
I SEE..
OR YOURSELVES.
GRANNY TUNI...

?
RYUZAKI WAS ALWAYS A TROUBLE-MAKER,
HUF
HUF
AARRH-
AAAAARRGH!!!!
AAA AA H!!!
AA RR RR GH !!!
WISH HE WERE HERE TO WITNESS THAT SMILE WITH US. JUST LOOK AT THAT IT ...
I BET SHE GETS ALL THE BOYS,

PERHAPS IF YOU SMILED A LITTLE MORE YOU WOULDN'T SCARE PEOPLE AWAY.
I DON'T CARE ABOUT ANY OF THAT, GRANNY TUNI.
WHAT DO YOU CARE ABOUT THEN? LISTEN TO ME YOUNG LADY,
THE INCIDENT PALES IN COMPARISON TO WHAT LILY DARDANELLE HAS HAD TO ENDURE AS A CHILD,
FL FL FL FVL VL FL
LIKE A LILY SOAKED IN ALCOHOL AND MONITORED TO WILT IN EXTREME HEAT BUT YET, HERE SHE IS, BASKING IN GLORY UNDER THE SAME TEMPERATURES,
MOVED ON AND HAPPY,

SKRREEE
THAT'S WHAT I WANT FOR YOU ALL, "".
!! LEAP !!
I'M GLAD YOU EVEN HAVE A FRIEND BUT IM EVEN MORE GLAD ITS LILY.
DON'T LET THE TRAGEDY CONTROL YOU'RE LIVES.
I'M POSITIVE THAT FLOUREENE WOULD WANT MORE FOR THE BOTH OF YOU, AFTER SEVERAL YEARS,
WHAT BETTER WAY FOR HER TO ARISE FROM THE AWFUL COMA THAT TO SEE THE BOTH OF YOU, TOGETHER AGAIN.

TO WILT...
AND THEN
BASK.
TO BE CONTINUED